

Anderson, H. George.

The North Carolina Synod Through 175 Years.

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The North Carolina Synod Through 175 Years

1803 - 1978



Cover: "Old Pine Church" Meeting House drawn by
Clyde Overcash of Salisbury, North Carolina.

***THE NORTH CAROLINA SYNOD
THROUGH 175 YEARS
(1803-1978)***

H. GEORGE ANDERSON

Div. Sch.
284.1756
A 546
N 873
1978

For George R. Whittecar, D. D.
President of the North Carolina Synod, 1963-1978



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PREFACE

Five years ago, the Historical Committee of the North Carolina Synod published *Foundations of Lutheranism in North Carolina*. That booklet described the people and pastors who brought Lutheranism to North Carolina before the Revolutionary War.

As a contribution to the 175th Anniversary of the synod the same committee has authorized another booklet which will sketch the history of the synod from its organization in 1803 to the present.

The modest size of this study prohibits great detail at any point; the full story of the synod's life and work remains to be told. The author is especially conscious that most individuals who are mentioned are officers of institutions or of synodical organizations. The numerous lay persons who invested their lives in synodical projects are represented by only a few examples. Perhaps this essay will prompt others to tell the story more fully.

Most quotations are taken from synodical minutes. Additional material in Chapter I is from the *North Carolina Historical Review*, January and April, 1930. For exact citations from Chapter II, see my *Lutheranism in the Southeastern States, 1860-1886*. Chapters III and IV include material from *History of the North Carolina Lutheran Men*, and Chapter IV uses quotations from the *North Carolina Lutheran*.

The author joins G. D. Bernheim and George Cox in the wish they added to the preface of their history of the synod in 1903: "If, by the reading of this History, the present and future members of the North Carolina Synod will be inspired to carry on the work of ministering at her altars with the pure Word and Sacraments, and extending her church work as faithfully as their predecessors have done, the authors will be fully satisfied that their labor has not been in vain."

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I

"Proper Means for the Spread of the Gospel" **1803 - 1853**

"The groom secures a certificate from the Superior Officer at Salisbury, comes riding along with his friends of both sexes, the bride riding by his side, to the pastor, or if none is available, to the Justice of the Peace, where the ceremony is performed. He enters holding in his right hand his flask of rum, greets with a 'good morning,' drinks to the health of the one officiating, produces his certificate and then goes back to get his bride and the rest of the party. The questions directed to the groom are: whether he has stolen (that is, kidnapped) his bride — which occurs frequently — and whether the parents have given their consent. If one steals his bride and has a license from Salisbury the objections of the parents are of no avail. As a rule in this country the son, as soon as he has reached his twenty-first year, and the daughter as soon as she is eighteen years old, no longer stand under the control of their parents . . ."

The astounded young pastor who wrote that account had recently arrived in Davidson County, fresh from his theological studies in Germany. He was Arnold Roschen, a missionary sent out to North Carolina to strengthen the tiny group of pastors who were attempting to serve German-speaking settlers there.

During the Revolution there had been only two Lutheran pastors in North Carolina, but renewed prosperity after the war made it possible to offer positions to two more. While none of the farmers was really wealthy, most of them owned two or three hundred acres, fifty to sixty of them cleared and tilled. If the German mission society could send over pastors, the settlers would raise a subscription which would enable the pastors to buy a farm and even save a modest sum. Furthermore, "flour, corn, hams, sausages, dried fruits, chickens and turkeys, geese, etc., were abundantly furnished from all quarters." In return, the parishioners expected regular pastoral services and some attention. "Since all preachers in North America receive their charges . . .," wrote Roschen to a friend in Germany, "everyone who makes a subscription considers himself an integral part and believes that the preacher is dependent upon him."

After the arrival of Roschen, there were four pastors to serve Lutherans in the vast area from Burlington to Lincoln. Roschen settled near Lexington, and he described his colleagues as follows:

"The Rev. Mr. Nussmann, in Mecklenburg County, lives about 40 miles from me. Pastor Storch, in Salisbury, is my good friend. He enjoys the affectionate devotion of all his congregations, and deserves it, too. He lives in Salisbury, a place with about 50 or 60 houses of which only ten are German homes. Mr. Ahrends [Arends], on the Catawba, is the third German pastor of this section. He is now the wealthiest among us and has numerous plantations and slaves, but very few parishioners. He came as a religious teacher with Pastor Nussmann from Germany. Now he is ordained. He enjoys the love of his congregation."

In the absence of regularly ordained clergy, the people had tried to provide religious services for themselves by occasional contacts with the Moravians at Salem, or by accepting itinerant pretenders who claimed that they had been ordained in Europe. These pretenders would usually stay at least long enough to collect some fees for solemnizing marriages, baptizing children, or preaching a funeral sermon. Some times they would stay four or five years, but sooner or later they would move on to find a new source of income. Lutheran pastors also mention "untutored fanatics" — probably lay preachers of other denominations — who were attracted to vacant pulpits. No wonder that weddings had become so casual and crude!

The four pastors realized that more help was needed. Two likely candidates were at hand. After constituting themselves an "assembly" in 1791, they ordained candidates Bernhardt and Stanger who had probably received theological education in Germany. A third candidate, Robert J. Miller, was ordained in 1794.

The distance between congregations was covered on horseback, along trails just wide enough for a wagon to jolt between tree-trunks. Prospective missionaries were advised to bring dark-colored clothes that would not show the dirt, and to bring boots for riding and for protection from snakes and ticks while walking. They were advised not to bring a European wife with them if they wished to avoid "a thousand sad experiences."

"The visiting of the sick, funerals, and other pastoral duties call for a great deal of time when the distances are so far," Roschen wrote to a friend in 1790, "and I am usually genuinely tired when evening comes." In addition to managing his own farm, a minister served several churches, preaching every Sunday and occasional week days and holidays. Since the people rode up to eighteen miles to church, they felt cheated if the sermon was less than an hour in length. However, since only one congregation could be served each Sunday, members might hope for no more than one service each month, so they

received an average of fifteen minutes of sermon per week. Baptisms could be held immediately after the regular service. Weddings were customarily at the parsonage or at a relative's home. Catechization required several weeks of instruction to candidates of all ages, and the pastor usually boarded temporarily in the neighborhood, so that classes could be held on consecutive days. Celebrations of the Lord's Supper were preceded by preparatory services on Fridays.

Then there were funerals. "Funerals take place in the following manner: If the church is too far removed the dead are buried at their home, occasionally also at the home of a good neighbor where then gradually a sort of a churchyard is formed. If, however, as is usually the case, they are brought to the church (to a regular cemetery), the coffin is first placed before the front door of the house. At the foot of the corpse stands the preacher, and around the coffin on all sides, the congregation . . . Everyone considers it his duty to come, and indeed on horseback. Then the pastor has a song, or at least a few verses, sung, after which he gives a short address of about eight to ten minutes. Meanwhile the lid of the coffin is removed and the women crowd around uttering a pitiful wail, then the pastor orders the coffin to be closed and placed in a wagon while the people mount their horses. Thus after refreshments of bread and rum at the house of the deceased the procession moves to the church. Upon arriving at the church the pastor commands a halt, the corpse is let down from the wagon, a few verses are sung, the coffin is again opened, and while singing the crowd marches by twos to the grave. After the body has been lowered a silent prayer is offered and the grave is filled during the singing of a song. Then still continuing their chant they betake themselves to the church where the funeral sermon is given from the pulpit." The haste with which the pastor was summoned for a funeral often permitted no more than the choosing of a text beforehand. An outline for the funeral sermon might be roughed out while the horse picked its way to the church.

The challenges of ministry in such circumstances wore out Nussmann by 1794. Roschen returned to Germany two years later. Other pastors moved to neighboring states. By 1800, only Arends and Storch remained of the original German missionaries. As helpers they had Robert J. Miller, and Paul Henkel, a new arrival from Virginia. These four met in 1803 to organize the "Synod of the Lutheran and Protestant Episcopal Church." The title reflected the presence of Robert Miller, who, for the lack of an Episcopal diocese in the Western part of North Carolina, had been ordained by the Lutherans. He would remain a colleague and officer of the Lutheran Synod until 1821. Despite the odd title, the Synod considered itself, and usually referred to itself, as simply "Lutheran."



Reverend Paul Henkel



Reverend David Henkel



Reverend Gottlieb Schober

In the years following the Revolution, the religious outlook of the pastors had shifted away from the mild rationalism of the German missionaries. Although the two senior men in point of service were from that earlier group, Arends was old and nearly blind, while Storch seemed open to more personal religious expressions. Both Henkel and Miller were vigorous proponents of a warm and active Christianity. They worked closely with the Moravians and the German Reformed, only drawing the line at unbridled emotionalism and "fanaticism." The eruption of camp meetings in North Carolina — Henkel called them "storm sermons" — caused serious discussion among the pastors. Storch favored them; Henkel was more cautious. The Synod eventually decided to hold three-day preaching services among the German congregations, in which emotionalism was not excluded, but "bodily agitations" were considered taboo.

Tension was greater, however, in dealing with the Baptists. Paul Henkel recorded an encounter in 1802: "At the request of a certain number who desired to have the conformity of infant baptism explained in relation to the Scriptures, the Church Council consented that I should give a sermon covering that subject. The report that this sermon was to be preached brought together many people, both German and English . . . There were many immersionists (Baptists) in the audience . . . These found my sermon so contrary to their taste that they strongly disapproved . . . one of their company who carried a large club in his hand stepped up to the pulpit and interrupted my sermon. He ordered me to be silent . . . I left the pulpit and stepped before the table in order to speak with the fellow, but I was immediately surrounded by all his companions, men and women and all seemed ready to attack me . . . I motioned to the deacons, and they went to the door and beckoned all the people to follow them . . . We thought that if it should come to blows it should not be done in the church . . . The immersionists were at variance as some approved the man's action, and others took a contrary position . . . They were so angry that they had to vent their fury on themselves, as we had all left the church. One of the women on leaving the building showed her anger by seizing a young, simple-minded woman by the arm and giving her a pull saying, 'I am surprised that you can listen to this preacher. You will go to hell with him.' The young woman was so frightened from the attack that she was sick for several weeks."

The synod formed in 1803 had very limited functions. Above all, it was intended to provide congregations with adequately prepared ministers. It achieved this goal in two ways. On the one hand, it served as a central agency to which vacant congregations could appeal for pastoral services. On the other, it approved candidates seeking to become ministers, and provided them with an orderly process of education leading to ordination.

It was an effort to uphold this latter standard of ministerial

quality that led to the first crisis in the synod's young life. Paul Henkel had two sons who followed their father into the ministry of the North Carolina Synod. Philip Henkel was ordained soon after the synod had been organized, but David, born in 1795, was not ready for licensing as a candidate until 1812. The next year he took over the ministry of congregations in Lincoln County which had been served by his older brother. Brilliant and aggressive, David read widely and deeply in Lutheran literature. He had no formal theological training, and therefore, his ideas had not been shaped by the thinking of his fellow pastors, nor even greatly by his own family. His authorities were books, particularly the Book of Concord and other historical Lutheran material. On the basis of his study, he presented himself as a candidate for successive grades of ministry leading to ordination. The synod, unprepared for such a young candidate — he was only 17 when he received his first license to preach — repeatedly granted his requests for advancement and then hastened to pass rules which would make subsequent exceptions impossible. Meanwhile, David's polemical sermons, which occasionally stretched to three hours, alienated members of the Reformed and Presbyterian Churches in his neighborhood. Complaints flooded in. The key leader of the synod was its secretary, Gottlieb Shober, who was less interested in Lutheran doctrine than he was in good relations among Christians. It was clear to Shober that the synod would have to exercise its supervisory function over licentiate Henkel. At its meeting in 1819 the synod revoked Henkel's license and put him on probation for six months.

David Henkel and his family disputed the legality of that synod meeting and held a meeting of their own, at which he was ordained. Subsequent efforts at reconciliation failed, and the Henkels organized a synod in Tennessee the following year. Since David and other pastors of the Tennessee Synod continued to serve congregations in North Carolina, two synodical bodies existed side by side in the state for a century. Although the constitutions of the two bodies differed in some respects, both of them saw the principal role of the synod to be the guaranteeing of a qualified ministry. The Tennessee Synod declared (1828) that its business was to "give necessary advice, employ proper means for the spread of the Gospel, expose false teachings and teachers, and examine candidates for the ministry." Its efforts to minimize the power of the synod and to maintain the autonomy of the congregation ultimately collided with its function as a guardian of ministerial standards. Efforts by Tennessee Synod authorities to discipline a pastor led to a further schism in 1848, since the dissidents claimed that the synod had no right to tell a congregation whom their minister should be. The new group, called the Tennessee Synod Reorganized, maintained congregations near Hickory and Newton and eventually affiliated with the Joint Synod of Ohio, a predecessor body

of the American Lutheran Church.

Both synods attempted to educate future ministers, but neither of them felt that the job was being done adequately. An infant seminary of the Tennessee Synod vanished in the throes of organization. The North Carolina Synod finally contributed to the support of the seminary opened by the South Carolina Synod in 1830. For the most part, however, students simply learned by living and working with active ministers. Both synods collected funds from donors for "beneficiary education," which meant the board and room costs of these apprentice pastors.

Outside of funds for theological studies and the printing of minutes, the synods handled little money. Occasionally collections would be taken to reimburse pastors for missionary journeys they had made to the Midwest, but there were no continuing expenses.

North Carolinians were restless people, and in the decades after the Revolution they followed their comrade, Daniel Boone, into Kentucky and beyond. The synods sent missionaries to preach to these pioneers, beginning in 1810. A single journey three years later brought fifteen congregations into the North Carolina Synod. Thus, North Carolina, which had been a mission field in 1774, had become a missionary base within thirty-five years. By 1816, North Carolina Synod pastors were located in South Carolina, Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri. Tennessee Synod pastors and missionaries sent reports from Kentucky, Louisiana, Indiana, Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, and Ohio in the 1820's. In 1831 Philip Henkel reported that he had organized five congregations in Indiana the previous year.

Of course, the lines of communication began to stretch thin. It was impossible for ministers to ride hundreds of miles back across the mountains to attend synod meetings each year. The natural tendency was to form new synods among the heaviest concentrations of churches. Pastors in South Carolina and Southwestern Virginia separated from the mother synod in North Carolina by 1824 and 1842 respectively. Tennessee Synod ministers organized the Indiana Synod in 1835 and the Holston Synod in 1860. By rights the Holston Synod should have taken the name "Tennessee Synod" with it, since all of its churches were in that state, and none of the remaining Tennessee Synod churches were. After 1860, the "Tennessee Synod," therefore, had churches in North and South Carolina and Virginia, but none left in Tennessee!

As a part of their responsibility for the quality of worship in the congregations, both synods recommended hymnals and catechisms. Since the Henkel family operated a printing business in Virginia, the Tennessee Synod was especially active in distributing approved books. In some cases the synods provided necessary materials, such as a funeral service, a collection of Luther's sermons, an English hymnal, and a translation of the Book of Concord.

DAVID HENKEL
AGAINST THE UNITARIANS.

A
TREATISE

ON
THE PERSON AND INCARNATION OF
JESUS CHRIST,
IN WHICH SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL ARGUMENTS
OF THE
UNITARIANS
ARE
EXAMINED.

PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN TENNESSEE SYNOD.

NEW-MARKET :
PRINTED IN S. HENKEL'S OFFICE.

1830.

Title page of a pamphlet by David Henkel

Naturally, the early settlers used German almost exclusively, but as time passed, English became more common. The German pastors in 1790 noted that their members would speak German at home, but that they were beginning to adopt the English language in order to do business with their English neighbors. When it became clear that German might die out, the North Carolina Synod struggled to preserve it by urging the establishment of German schools.

Early catechetical instruction had included warnings not to marry the English or the Irish. The latter were considered "lazy, dissipated and poor." The English were reputed not to "adhere to any definite religion, do not have their children baptized; nor do they send them to any school, but simply let them grow up like domestic animals. . . . The English wife will not permit her husband to be master in his household, and when he likewise insists on his rights, crime and murder follow."

The efforts were not merely cultural. Observations of traveling ministers uniformly confirmed that families who moved across the mountains "left their religion behind with the German language."

As the decades passed, of course, other issues arose, including slavery. Some of the Tennessee Synod churches lay in East Tennessee, where slavery was not at all popular. A lay delegate raised the question in 1822, by asking "whether Slavery is not to be considered a great evil which is tolerated in our land?" The synod agreed that it was a great evil and hoped that "the government if possible, would devise some means as an antidote to this evil." The action is the earliest recorded Lutheran statement on the issue of slavery, and it is interesting to note that the government was expected to find a solution. The pastors were instructed "to admonish every master to treat his slaves well and to observe his Christian duties towards them." That action certainly implies that there were slave-owners among the members of synod. Later, in 1837, the North Carolina Synod directed its ministers "to have some place provided in each church for the colored people within the bounds of the same, and that a part of their sermon be particularly addressed to them." This may be the origin of the "slave galleries" which are often pointed out in old church buildings.

Church architecture in those early years was simple. Summer heat often made it more comfortable to meet out of doors. Churches were usually built of logs; they rarely held more than a hundred persons. The buildings were without heat, light, or musical instruments. Log benches would face a pulpit located in the center of one end wall. Before the pulpit would be a small table for the communion vessels; otherwise, the buildings were unadorned. These simple houses of worship provided the setting for religious instruction and synodical business for over half a century. Toward the mid nineteenth century

they gradually were replaced by frame structures, but the old log buildings had left a heritage of sturdy faith that would continue to characterize North Carolina Lutheranism.

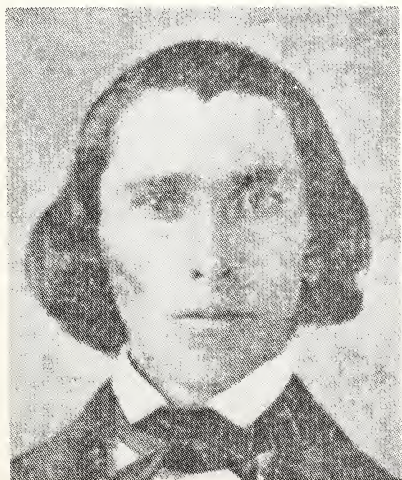
II

“Hearty Moral and Financial Support” 1854 - 1903

“We seem to act as if all our Churches were thrown into one common mart, to be disposed of on the principles of a broker’s office, the most successful jobber to be the incumbent for the time being.”

The speaker was President Joseph Linn. The date was 1854. The subject was the way by which pastors and congregations arranged calls. “There being no . . . mutual restrictions thrown around the Pastor and his Congregations,” said Linn, “each at pleasure may discard the other.” He urged the synod to change its role from “recommendatory” to “declarative” and to set up rules which would govern the relationship between the pastor and the congregations he served. The synod would devise parish alignments and require pastors to accept or resign calls from the entire parish, rather than dealing with one congregation at a time.

President Linn’s suggestion marked a significant change in the life of the North Carolina Synod. After fifty years of growth and experience, the synod was ready to adopt a stronger regulatory function in regard to its pastors and congregations; it was also ready to assume



Reverend Joseph A. Linn

THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE STATE OF RELIGION.

The Committee on the state of Religion, within the bounds of this Synod, have collected the following items, to wit :

Bro. Harter. "There is one prayer-meeting within the bounds of my charge—one Sunday School in progress, and efforts are making to organize another."

Bro. Crim. "My Churches can by no means be said to be in a state of revival at this time, but during the past Synodical year, I had a revival at Bethel Church, which resulted in the conversion of a few immortal souls.—The state of things in my Churches is at this time interesting, especially at St. Matthews."

Bro. Scherer. "During the past year I have enjoyed special seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. At several camp-meetings, as many as 80 souls were hopefully converted to God, and 65 added to the Church."

Bro. Rothrock. "There has been no special out-pouring of the Holy Spirit at Organ Church during the past year; yet the public preaching of the Gospel has been well attended, and a general desire evinced to receive instruction from the Bible—53 persons were added to the Church by the rite of confirmation."

Bro. Heilig. "The attendance upon the ministrations of God's house is usually good, and close attention is paid to the preached word. I hope there are not a few who have experienced the saving power of God's grace, and are going on to perfection."

Bro. Linn. "There have been no very special manifestations of the Divine Spirit in my charge during the past Synodical year. Preaching and the ordinances of God's house have been well attended. An increased spirit of liberality is manifest. There has been a very extensive circulation of religious books, and they are carefully read by the people generally. There have been several conversions during the year."

Bro. Groseclose. "The state of religion in my charge is improving. But few cases of discipline have been before the Councils. About 120 persons have professed a change of heart, 40 of whom have united with our Church. My Churches continue to contribute liberally towards my support, and the benevolent institutions of the Church."

Your Committee are gratified to learn that during the past year a comfortable parsonage has been erected in the last named Brother's charge. This noble example is commended to the attention and imitation of all our Congregations.

Bro. Dreher. "The state of religion in my charge is improving; preaching, prayer-meetings and Sabbath Schools are encouragingly attended."

new responsibilities. Its first half century had been spent in cautious efforts to provide a qualified ministry. Its second half century would see both the Tennessee and North Carolina Synods take bold steps toward the support of colleges and a foreign mission program.

It was also Joseph Linn who, during an earlier term as president, had challenged the synod to sponsor an academy. The thirty-two-year-old pastor had himself attended the classical and theological Institute in Lexington, South Carolina, and he was aware of educational institutions being developed in other synods. In 1852, the year of his proposal, the Reverend J. H. Brown of the Tennessee Synod made a similar suggestion to his colleagues, although nothing was done at the time, presumably because the Tennessee Synod constitution provided no way to fund the institution. The North Carolina Synod, however, readily adopted Linn's plan and amended its constitution to permit the new project. Soon a building was under construction in Mount Pleasant. At first merely a high school, the Western Carolina Male Academy, became a "graduating college" by 1859. Some members of synod felt that the location was too remote, and a special convention was held to decide between Mount Pleasant and nearby Concord. By a slim margin of three votes, the college, renamed "North Carolina College," stayed in Mount Pleasant.

At the time of the college's founding, the Reverend William Artz had warned his colleagues that "the expenditures at the first will necessarily be large and must continue to increase." Adequate buildings cost about \$10,000, and salaries for two faculty members required several hundred dollars each year. To meet these obligations the synod requisitioned every available penny. A "Centenary Fund," originally designated for ministerial students, was transferred to the college endowment. The "Seminary Fund," out of which the seminary in South Carolina received annual support, was likewise transferred to the college, so that the interest could be retained in North Carolina. Mothers and daughters organized to raise \$1,000 for scientific apparatus. A ministerial candidate travelled through the synod pleading for individual donations, and preaching in behalf of the college at Sunday services. Each synod meeting heard reports on new efforts to clear the college of debt.

Enthusiasm also ran high for home missions. Many German immigrants entered the state between 1850 and 1860, settling in the cities. A revitalized Mission Society raised a thousand dollars to help these immigrants start congregations in Wilmington and Charlotte. The amount was contributed outside of the regular synodical budget, since the latter rarely exceeded one hundred dollars in any year and was expended almost entirely for the printing of synodical minutes.

Then came war. The attack on Fort Sumter provoked a Federal blockade. All synodical programs faltered. Enrollment at the college

declined as students enlisted. The new church in Wilmington suffered occupation and vandalism. Synodical conventions were cancelled, or poorly attended. The Tennessee Synod, spread over three states, could hardly collect enough pastors in one place to hold a meeting. Secretary D. I. Dreher of the North Carolina Synod contrasted the peaceful separation of Abraham and Lot with the disputed secession efforts of his own day: "would to God the degenerate, and I must say, cruel and despotic Abram [Lincoln] of Illinois, would say, as the good . . . Abram of Ur of Chaldea said to his kinsman: 'Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee . . . ' We must separate. There is no human power that can unite us now, our union is **forever** broken: between North and South there is a 'great gulf fixed'." Both the Tennessee and North Carolina Synods explored the possibility of joining with other state synods of the Confederacy to form a General Synod of all Confederate Lutherans and to publish a common newspaper. The General Synod in the C. S. A. was organized in 1863 — at St. James Church, Concord, where D. I. Dreher was pastor — with every southern synod except Tennessee participating.

As the war dragged on, the church suffered. North Carolina College closed for lack of students in 1862. Inflation made the endowment funds almost worthless, so an unfortunate choice was made; the synod invested in Confederate Bonds. Patriotism also led many pastors to take their turn as missionaries to the army. That duty kept them away from their congregations for several weeks and their ministries suffered. As the tide turned against the Confederacy, morale wavered. Every congregation mourned the deaths of young men and mature householders. "Our church in North Carolina," said President G. D. Bernheim in 1864, "is suffering and bleeding at every pore."

Even the end of armed conflict did not bring peace to the church. Almost a year after Appomattox an observer wrote: "Our College is still closed; our mission fields lie uncared for, if not quite forgotten; our Sabbath schools, in many cases, if not closed, have been but feebly and inefficiently conducted; and our members are almost wholly without weekly periodical church literature . . . Some of our churches have suffered more or less seriously by divisions and contentions upon questions chiefly growing out of the war; and those have led to the formation of parties antagonistic to each other involving the array of one or the other party against their pastor . . . That the war has produced alienation in the household of faith, there can be no doubt."

One of the most immediate issues centered on the future relationship between Lutherans who had been slaves and their former owners. The action of the Tennessee Synod in 1866 outlined the problem: ". . . the colored people among us no longer sustain the same relation to the white man they did formerly, and that change has transferred the individual obligations and responsibility of owners to the whole Church,

... these colored people are considered firm adherents to our Church, and we feel it our imperative duty to assist them in adopting such measures as will meet best the necessities of their present condition ...” Clearly the synod felt its responsibility in terms of gracious help, much as slave owners had considered themselves responsible for the religious welfare of their slaves. The problem was that those slaves were now legally free, and equal to their former masters: “. . . some of them were formerly members of our congregations, and still claim membership in them, but owing to the plainly marked distinctions which God has made between us and them, giving different colors, etc., it is felt by us and them, also, that there ought to be separate places of worship, and also separate ecclesiastical organizations, so that everyone could worship God with the least possible embarrassment.”

During the twenty-five years following the war, attempts were made to provide the desired separate churches and organizations. However, the synods never really found a way to achieve their goals. The Tennessee Synod had a candidate for licensure in 1866, but nothing more was heard of him. The North Carolina Synod licensed Michael M. Coble in 1868, restricting him to work “among those of his own race.” Three other candidates later joined him, but the Synod remained cautious for a while. The black leaders neither appeared at synod conventions nor organized a conference of their own. They acted under the general supervision of local white pastors, who brought their reports to synod each year. Although licensed to preach, these early black candidates were never ordained.

By the end of Reconstruction greater sympathy arose for the freedmen. Many pastors had continued to serve blacks living in their areas, especially by performing marriages and funerals. Black and white congregations utilized the same church buildings on alternate Sundays. Gradually, however, the number of black Lutherans dwindled. As an antidote to this trend, the synod decided to ordain the Reverend D. J. Koontz in 1880 and Pastors Samuel Holt and Nathan Clapp shortly thereafter. Pastor Koontz preached at conference and synod meetings, but he was still not allowed to participate in synodical business or to vote. He organized four small congregations near Concord, and these groups sent an annual contribution to synod, which, although modest, was larger than the contributions of some white congregations.

The synod did provide Pastor Koontz with some support, but growth was disappointing and patience wore out. Pastor Koontz submitted his resignation “for lack of necessary pecuniary support,” but the synod would not allow him to resign. Efforts to transfer the work to the General Synod South and the General Synod North proved fruitless. The days of “Negro Missions” seemed numbered.

The three black pastors then took matters into their own hands. In 1889 they asked permission to form "the Alpha Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Freedmen in America." Permission was granted, and the minutes of their meeting are published with the North Carolina Synod Minutes of 1889. Soon the Reverend W. P. Phifer was added to their synod. Two years later a request from the Alpha Synod for help from the Missouri Synod was answered, and a missionary immediately was dispatched. By 1903 the Missouri Synod opened Immanuel College in Concord, for the education of black students and the preparation of black pastors. The school soon moved to Greensboro, where it continued for about fifty years. In this way, the Missouri Synod assumed responsibility for the work among North Carolina blacks.

Worship also became a point of controversy after the Civil War. Although Lutherans had never embraced the revival services of some other southern denominations wholeheartedly, many pastors held "protracted meetings" each year. The Reverend Simeon Scherer reported on his meetings in 1870: "The meetings from first to last were characterized by unusual attention to the preaching of the Word, a slow but gradual increase of prevailing seriousness and deep solemnity, with comparatively little outburst and noisy excitement, just as we prefer." Another pastor described those meetings with a bit more color: "When Rev's. Linn, Scherer, Scheck, Groseclose, Kimball, Julian and Shell got on fire with their themes . . . the people cried out, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' " Some pastors used these revival-like services to replace catechization. In 1866 one parish reported 123 conversions. Within the Tennessee Synod, however, and among some pastors of the North Carolina Synod, these methods came under sharp attack. The Reverend L. A. Crouse of the Tennessee Synod wrote that, although the Lutheran rule had always been to catechize new members, the "exception" to the rule was becoming more common: "This exception was the high pressure, quick process system; and its method was to steam through as quick as possible, sing up to the altar and give the right hand, thus reviving the church. And in this way the exception has revived many congregations to death."

While revivals continued to be a matter of debate, the trend in North Carolina moved toward more formal worship practices. In common with other southern synods, the North Carolina Synod sponsored a new **Book of Worship** in 1868. Earlier worship had been centered on the ministers: "Many will breathe a silent prayer, then look about to see who is there. Every time the door opens all look around, perhaps awaiting the minister. Presently the minister enters and immediately ascends the pulpit. Whilst he is finding his text and the hymns, the choir sings an introductory. He arises, gives out his hymn, reads a portion of Scripture. He then prays and all are silent from the fact that no

one knows what he intends to pray about or pray for. He then gives out another hymn, after the singing of which he announces his text and preaches the sermon, prays again, sings another hymn, and dismisses." The new hymnal and service book provided a form of worship which involved the congregations in singing liturgical responses and in rising for parts of the service. These innovations demanded much more of a congregation than the former practices had. One pastor who tried to introduce the new practice of rising for the service recorded sadly that, on the first try, "only one person stood up, beside my family." But he continued: "The next Sunday we had a full house at St. Enoch, and fifteen stood up. A member of the choir came after service, and asked me to meet the choir that afternoon and train them . . . They all learned to sing the glorias and responses. Soon the congregation, with a few exceptions, joined in the service." Other congregations continued to resist the new hymnal. The 1872 convention of synod heard that, in one parish, "the opposition was violent and determined." Some parishes used only the hymnal portion of the book. The Tennessee Synod, which had no part in the development of the **Book of Worship** gave it mild approval, but recommended that its congregations use the **Church Book** of the northern General Council.

Both of the recommended hymnals, however, reinforced trends toward richer liturgical services. Choirs became more important. Reed organs grew in popularity. Communion and catechization received more attention. Although few ministers wore robes of any sort, the black preaching gown was used in some places. Brick churches replaced frame structures in Charlotte, Salisbury, Concord and elsewhere. A **Common Service** was adopted in 1888 by both the Tennessee and North Carolina Synods, in cooperation with all Lutheran synods in the Southeast, and most congregations became familiar with a liturgical form of worship.

Despite controversy and change, the synods tried to pick up projects which the war had interrupted, and the most important of these projects was education. North Carolina College reopened in 1867, and two years later the synod also assumed control of Mount Pleasant Female Seminary — later "Mont Amoena Seminary." Essentially a boarding school for girls, the "Seminary" had been founded privately just before the war. Thus, by 1870, the North Carolina Synod was supporting two educational institutions in Mount Pleasant. It also had decided to send its ministerial candidates to Mount Pleasant for a seminary education, since the South Carolina seminary had virtually disappeared after the war. In order to concentrate its efforts on these institutions and other local projects, the North Carolina Synod withdrew from the General Synod, South, in 1871 and remained independent for nine years.

The Tennessee Synod, too, at last initiated plans for an institution

of higher learning. As more of its young people had desired education, they had patronized the North Carolina Synod's college at Mount Pleasant, or the Reformed Church's college at Catawba. The latter arrangement came to an end in 1874, when the Reformed Church did not side with Tennessee Synod Pastor J. M. Smith in a debate with a local Methodist minister. Tennessee Synod leaders began to discuss where they might establish a high school of their own. The choice first fell on Hickory, but arrangements did not work out. Newton and Conover then were also given an opportunity to bid for the new school. Although none of the three cities received a clear majority of votes, Conover made the most attractive offer. Concordia High School opened in Conover in 1877, with one of Smith's theological students, Robert A. Yoder, as the principal. Three years later the name became "Concordia College," and in 1883 the synod accepted it under its "fostering care." With a college of its own, the Tennessee Synod next decided to call a theological professor, so that it could educate its own candidates for the ministry. In 1885 it resolved to assess each congregation an amount sufficient to provide \$800 annually for a theological professor's salary. Like its sister synod in North Carolina, it now had become more than an advisory body; it had assumed financial responsibility for an institution.

Ironically, progress proved fatal. Although the student body at Concordia increased and prospects looked bright, attempts to launch a \$10,000 building campaign precipitated a new crisis. Many synod members had not been happy with the decision to locate the college in Conover. Expensive buildings would make that location permanent. Rather than invest \$10,000 more at Conover, many people, including Concordia President Robert A. Yoder and his faculty, urged that the college be moved to Hickory. When their request was refused, Yoder and the faculty resigned. Faced with an emergency, the Board of Trustees appointed interim instructors for the 1891-92 academic year and immediately wrote to the English District of the Missouri Synod for help in locating qualified faculty members. Earlier exchanges of delegates and correspondence with the conservative midwestern body made the approach a natural one. By 1892 Missouri Synod teachers were on the scene, and since the Board of Trustees had made the appointments without consulting the Tennessee Synod, the latter body dropped its interest in Concordia College.

In the meantime, a new college had been founded in Hickory. Back when the location of Concordia College had first been discussed, Colonel Walter W. Lenoir had offered land in Hickory. In his will, Colonel Lenoir left the land, plus some adjoining property, for the establishment of a high school or college. The Trustee of this estate once again approached pastors in Hickory and renewed the offer in 1890, the year of Colonel Lenoir's death. The two Hickory pastors held



Lenoir College, 1899

responsible positions in the synod; the Reverend J. C. Moser had served as president of Concordia College and the Reverend A. L. Crouse had been a trustee. The pastors, in turn, discussed the possibility of a move privately with President Yoder and Professor W. P. Cline, and all four men agreed that the College would have better prospects of success in Hickory. A special meeting of the synod was called in December of 1890, but a majority of two votes maintained the location in Conover. President Yoder resigned within a week, and after extensive negotiation the resignation was accepted — effective in May. Yoder, Cline and the Hickory pastors immediately proceeded to negotiate with the trustee in Hickory. They gave personal notes to meet the terms of the offer — \$10,000 endowment and buildings suitable for 150 students — and were ready to open Lenoir College in September of 1891. Robert A. Yoder became first president; A. L. Crouse was elected theological professor. By 1895 the synod adopted Lenoir College, pledging its “heartly moral and financial support.”

As both synods assumed new responsibilities for education, they were also increasing the tempo of their home mission activity. New congregations had been established at the rate of about five per decade in the North Carolina Synod, and ten per decade in the Tennessee Synod. Although the latter synod organized more congregations, the size of those congregations was somewhat smaller than the average in the North Carolina Synod. After 1870, however,

GOVERNMENT.

The institution is under the supervision of a Board of Trustees. The students in all the departments are governed by the Faculty. They will be led to regard the institution as a home, in which all share in common duties as well as common privileges. A high estimate of character and a love of the right for its own sake will be inculcated. More severe measures will be employed, if necessary, to secure discipline—expulsion as the last resort.

No openly immoral, idle, or disobedient student will be received or retained in the institution.

Very few positive rules are laid down. Every student is *expected* to conduct himself according to the dictates of a Christian conscience. The following, however, may be noted:

I.—WHAT IS REQUIRED.

1. Daily attendance at chapel service.
2. Attendance at church and Sunday-school on the Lord's Day.
3. A strict observance of study hours.
4. Permission to leave the College, or town.
5. Excuses for absence from recitations.
6. Compliance with all the requirements of the Faculty.

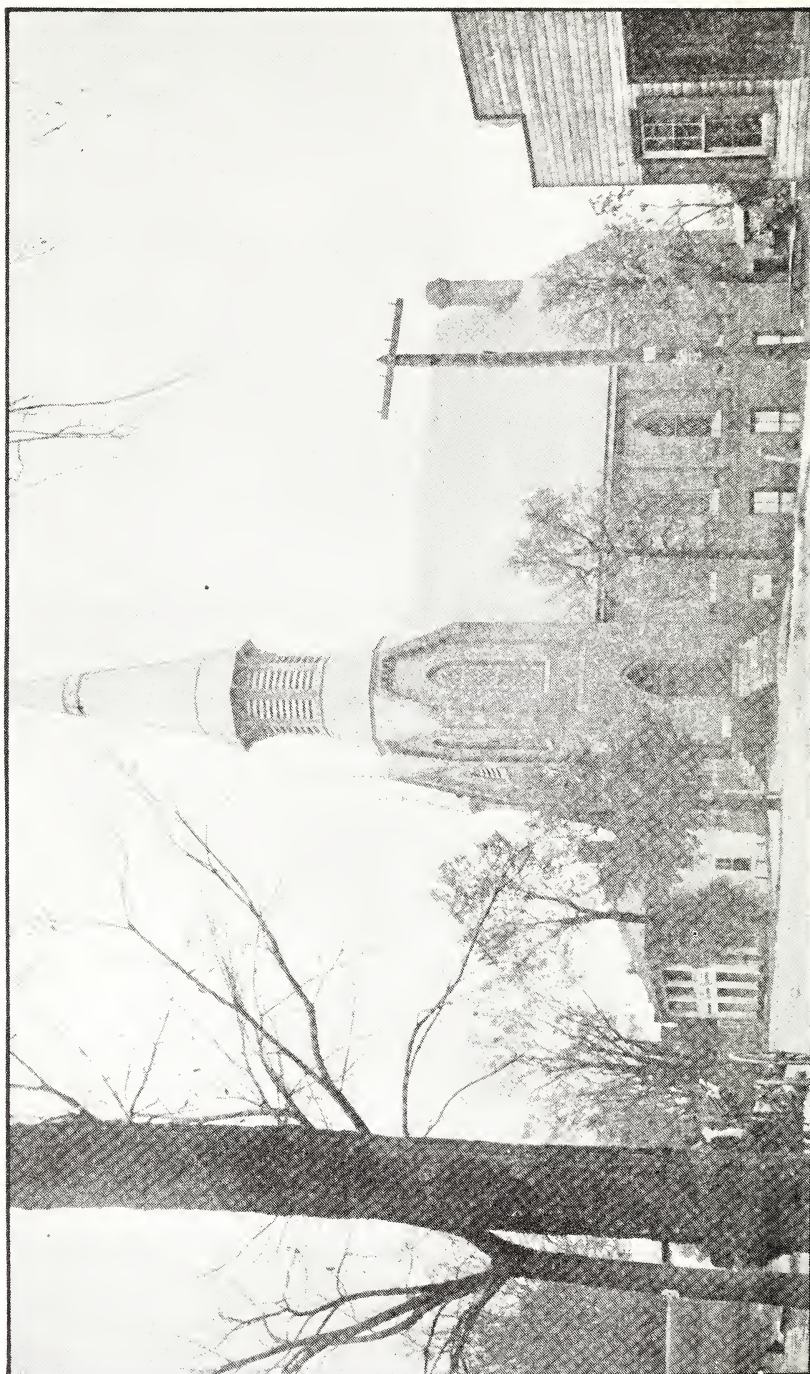
II.—WHAT IS PROHIBITED.

1. Association of ladies and gentlemen during the five school days of the week.
2. Card playing, or other games of chance, the use of intoxicating drinks, and profane or obscene language.
3. The abuse of buildings or furniture of the College.
4. All secret societies.

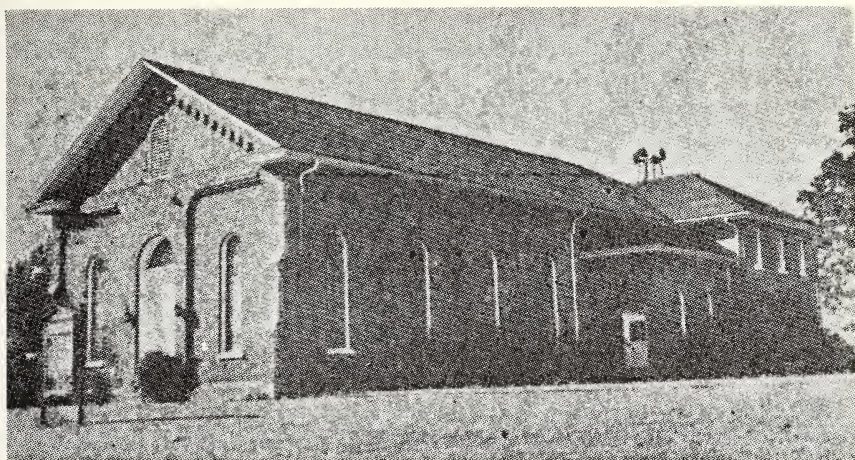
the North Carolina Synod began to equal the record of her sister synod in founding new congregations. A small gift for "Church Extension" from St. Enoch's congregation stimulated other contributions to a loan fund which amounted to nearly two thousand dollars by 1902. The decade from 1891 to 1900 saw eleven congregations organized. Two strong city congregations, First, Albemarle (1880) and Augsburg, Winston-Salem (1891) appeared in this era. The Tennessee Synod broke a long-standing rule and set up a central treasury for the support of Home Missions in 1876. This step greatly strengthened the idea of a central synodical authority among that group.

Obviously, increased responsibility demanded increased resources, and in the early 1870's the synods discovered a new means of "systematic benevolence" which helped make later growth possible. Prior to 1870, the synods depended upon annual "collections" in the congregations for funds to print minutes and to pay travel expenses for representatives to other synodical conventions. The method was haphazard and produced barely enough money to cover printing costs. "A collection is announced for a certain Sunday — maybe on the very Sunday on which the collection is to be taken up — to be devoted, say, to educating our ministry. Then the box is sent round; the members who happen to be present — often very few — those of them who feel disposed to do something slip their hands into their pockets and take out five or ten cents, and some maybe even a dollar, and drop it into the box. This, then, repeated two or three times during the year is the way in which the great machinery of the church for spreading the gospel to the ends of the earth is to be kept in motion." The Tennessee Synod averaged contributions of six cents per member for synodical causes in 1872. About that time, most southern synods introduced the "Mite Box," or the "Lord's Treasury." This little box or bank was placed in every home, and families were urged to contribute something every "first day of the week." Every three months the boxes were opened and the contents given to the congregational treasurer. This systematic way provided vastly more money for all the educational and missionary programs which became characteristic of synods during this era.

Foreign missions excited North Carolina Lutherans in 1885, and another significant change occurred in synodical life. Although both synods had organized Education and Missionary Societies generations before, these "societies" met only at the annual conventions of synod and consisted chiefly of clergymen. The "societies" were little more than yearly rallies or fund-raising meetings. There were few opportunities for lay involvement in the wider work of the Church. Then, in 1885, a missionary bound for India visited North Carolina. His appeal for support stimulated the organization of "Women's Missionary Societies" — and the idea of an "auxiliary" was born.



St. James Lutheran Church, Concord, ca. 1890s



Daniel's Lutheran Church, built in 1889

Six local missionary societies organized in 1885. By the next year there were fourteen, and the "Women's Home and Foreign Missionary Society of the North Carolina Lutheran Synod" counted \$275 in contributions. The idea caught the imagination and enthusiasm of women in every congregation. A week of prayer observance began in 1885. Thank offerings, birthday offerings, mite boxes, and honorary memberships swelled the contributions. Ministers' wives were asked to donate fees which their husbands had received for performing marriages "on the date nearest Christmas." By 1892 the missionary societies were dividing \$700 each year between home and foreign causes, with all money in excess of \$700 going to support the "Women's Special" congregation, Macedonia in Burlington. Japan was the overseas field to which the women gave particular attention; in addition, three pastors, the Revs. R. B. Peery and A. J. Stirewalt of the North Carolina Synod, and the Reverend C. K. Lippard of the Tennessee Synod, served in Japan as missionaries of the United Synod of the South.

In the process of organizing women's societies, auxiliaries for children and young people also developed. At first a part of the Women's Missionary Society, the Children's Missionary Society was founded in 1886. Each child member paid annual dues of twenty-five cents, which helped to support the work of the parent society. Young people also banded together for similar purposes. The students at Mont Amoena Female Seminary, the Girl's Guild of Charlotte, the Luther League of the North Carolina Synod and the Young People's Society of the Tennessee Synod all contributed to the great cause of

overseas evangelism. These new auxiliaries involved many more persons than formerly in programs of education and service. By 1903 the potential of this movement had scarcely been touched.

As one looks back over the half-century preceding 1900, one sees important parallels between the North Carolina and Tennessee Synods. Both had grown from advisory bodies with little power to strong jurisdictions with authority to regulate pastoral relationships, financial programs, missionary strategy and educational institutions. In worship and doctrine they were also moving toward a common position. In fact the reasons for separation began to blur, and several ministers in each synod raised the possibility of reunion. As early as 1870, both synods approved merger discussions, which were held at Mount Pleasant the next year.

The discussion of reunion disclosed some serious tensions within the North Carolina Synod. Although it was easy to reach agreement on theology and liturgy, the practice of revivals still caused friction. Tennessee Synod delegates later reported to their synod that they had done little but listen to the North Carolina Synod pastors debate among themselves. A "Basis" for union did ultimately appear, but details could not find consensus on both sides. Within the North Carolina Synod a committee appointed to investigate synodical sentiment on the question of revivals refused to recommend a course of action because any decision would "distract and divide" the church. Merger negotiations were postponed for five years, and never seriously attempted again until after 1900.

Despite these difficulties, the synods did manage certain types of cooperation. The major instrument for their common work was the United Synod of the South, organized in 1886. This general body, embracing almost all Lutherans in the Southeast, was the descendant of the body which had been established in the Confederacy during the Civil War. For a few years in the 1870's, neither of the two synods in North Carolina belonged to a general body, but laymen of the North Carolina Synod encouraged it to rejoin its southern neighbors in 1880, and a similar impulse among Tennessee Synod congregations brought the more comprehensive union in 1886. Chiefly an advisory body, the United Synod of the South did coordinate home and foreign missionary efforts, support Southern Seminary, and publish a **Common Service** for worship. All of these powers, however, had to be delegated specifically by the synods. Even though the member synods had long abandoned the idea that they had only recommendatory powers, they resisted giving stronger powers to a regional body. It would take several generations before a new vision of cooperative effort would challenge them to reorient their thinking.

III

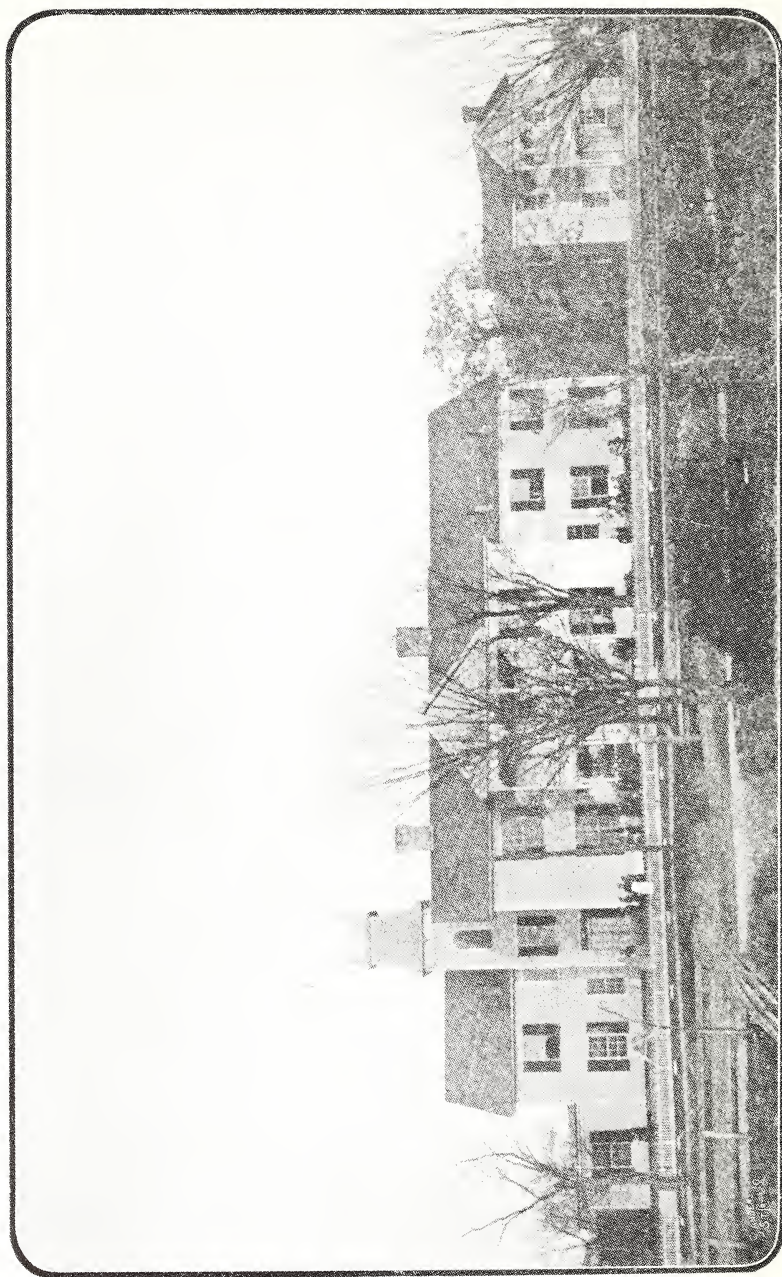
“The King’s Business and My Business” 1903 - 1947

On the night of October 9, 1903, Pilgrim Lutheran Church — just completed hours before — burned to the ground. The Davidson County congregation was one of the oldest in North Carolina, tracing its history back to 1754. By the turn of the century, however, it had divided into two worshipping communities, one aligned with the Tennessee Synod and one with the North Carolina Synod. Sale of their previous house of worship had provided these two groups with enough money to construct a new building, but the disastrous fire left them with neither capital nor church.

The crisis led to cooperation. Pastor Peyton Wade of the North Carolina Synod and Pastor C. L. Miller of the Tennessee Synod conferred with each other and with their respective congregations. They agreed to merge and to join the North Carolina Synod. Once united, they started to rebuild, dedicating their new church seven months later, “the latter house being more beautiful than the former.”

The story of Pilgrim Church is a pattern for larger movements toward cooperation between the separated sister synods after 1903. In several instances mutual needs nudged the Tennessee and North Carolina Synods closer to one another until, in a sudden burst of activity, union was achieved. As in the case of Pilgrim Church, the latter state was better than the former.

Financial pressures at North Carolina College forced the North Carolina Synod to explore possibilities for cooperation in education with the Tennessee Synod. In 1902 a committee had reported the college to have “insufficient money, inadequate resources, no encouraging prospects, and no cheering hopes.” The committee suggested that operations at the college be suspended for a year, and that students on scholarships no longer be required to attend the school in Mt. Pleasant. The Synod then decided to accept an earlier approach from the Tennessee Synod concerning consolidation of Lutheran education in the state. At that time the Tennessee Synod owned Lenoir College and also recognized Gaston College, which was



Mont Amoena Seminary, ca. 1902

privately operated by a member of the synod. The North Carolina Synod, of course, owned North Carolina College, Mont Amoena Seminary for Women, and also recognized Elizabeth College, a woman's college operated by a pastor in Charlotte since 1899.

The quest for cooperation lasted nearly a decade. It would have been resolved sooner if Lenoir College had been more receptive, or if North Carolina College had been more confident. The fact was, however, that Lenoir College was doing well and did not see the need for cooperation with other institutions. It continued to grow, and its future was secured by a gift of \$300,000 from Mr. David Rhyne in 1922. North Carolina College, on the other hand, continued to search for a clearly defined mission and identity. First it reduced its program to the junior college level and took the name "Mount Pleasant Collegiate Institute." Then it introduced a military element in its curriculum. Meanwhile, although the synod maintained ownership of the school, it turned over management to Col. George F. McAllister. He became the president of the institution, the chief fund raiser, and a source of inspiration to generations of students. Despite his efforts, MPCCI tottered on the edge of insolvency. Well-meaning synodical gestures to solve the school's problems probably did more harm than good. Each year the synod appropriated \$1,000 toward insurance on its property and on building maintenance, but larger funding drives fizzled. "All efforts to rally the people around it have failed," declared Synod President V. Y. Boozer in 1910. "I believe the time has come for the Synod to seriously consider its removal to some place where it can better accomplish the work for our young men that is so much needed." In response, the synod voted to open another round of negotiations with Lenoir College. The issue of coeducation blocked that effort, however, since the North Carolina Synod hoped to maintain separate schools for men and women, while the Tennessee Synod was satisfied with its coeducational arrangement at Hickory. So nothing was done. Mount Pleasant Collegiate Institute and Mont Amoena Seminary continued to cry for help. "Oh for a . . . Rhyne to make it possible to supply pressing needs!" pleaded Col. McAllister in 1920. There was no answer.

The other major impetus toward cooperation between the synods came from expanding home mission work. The 1903 convention of the North Carolina Synod began asking whether a synodical missionary should be employed to care for vacant parishes and to open new fields. A full-time man was placed in the field less than two years later. Expansion followed. In the decade between 1903 and 1912, at least nineteen Lutheran congregations were organized in the state. This record would not be equalled again until the 1950's. Yet funds were short. "We have already lost much valuable territory, and how to keep from losing more is the staring question," reported the Missions Committee in 1909. At first, cooperation with the Tennessee Synod was

aimed at avoiding competition. Each synod agreed to stay out of communities which had been "preoccupied" by the other body and to advise members moving into those communities to join existing congregations. Although not always observed, the agreement represented one more step on the road to closer fellowship. The most important element in the process may actually have been the presupposition, first agreed to in 1905, that the two synods were "confessionally the same in doctrine, closely connected geographically, and largely the same in practice."

1914 brought the catalyst that led to union. A committee appointed to devise plans for the proper celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Reformation challenged the North Carolina Synod to open negotiations with the Tennessee Synod concerning a plan "to unite all Lutherans of the State of North Carolina into one synodical body." The vision extended beyond local union; it also included union of three Lutheran bodies in the United States and Canada. The Tennessee Synod accepted the offer, and within a year most aspects of union had been settled. One issue remained unresolved. Historically, the Tennessee Synod had taken a strong stand against membership in "oath-bound secret societies," while the North Carolina Synod had been more tolerant. Union negotiations could not settle this single practical point, not just because of the doctrinal differences, but also because some pastors held insurance through the lodges. Ironically, the hurdle was cleared by merger at the national level. In 1918 both synods became members of a new general body, the United Lutheran Church in America. While both of them had previously been members of the United Synod, South, that agency did not require much of its constituent synods. One of the principles of the new body was that synods should be geographical and should not overlap. That principle spelled the end of the Tennessee Synod, which had congregations in three states occupied by other synods. The United Lutheran Church worked out a method by which the Tennessee Synod would join the North Carolina Synod to form a new body, the United Evangelical Lutheran Synod of North Carolina. After merger, the congregations of the Tennessee Synod in Virginia and South Carolina would be transferred to the synods in those states.

The merger convention met in Salisbury on March 2, 1921. Each synod had convened in special session the day before, the Tennessee Synod at Haven Church and the North Carolina Synod at St. John's Church. After joint worship services the delegates approved a constitution and elected officers. A seal bearing the portrait of Martin Luther above clasped hands represented the new sense of identity and cooperation of the United Synod of North Carolina. President Jacob L. Morgan of the former North Carolina Synod was elected president, and the Rev. H. B. Schaeffer of the former Tennessee Synod was elec-

Reverend Jacob Levi Morgan



ted secretary. The choice of treasurer was obvious: James D. Heilig had served the North Carolina Synod in that capacity since 1896. His son, Charles S. Heilig, would succeed him and continue the family tradition until 1975.

The new president, Dr. Jacob Levi Morgan, was an excellent choice. Educated by the North Carolina Synod at its own college and seminary, he had experience as a parish pastor and as a synodical missionary. His dedication to expansion of the church, vigorous leadership, and a businesslike approach exactly suited the needs of the day. He wanted a thorough integration of the two synods, so he worked for district boundaries that would include churches of both backgrounds, and he advised congregations that were seeking a pastor to select one from their sister tradition. The remainder of this chapter will consider events from his long presidency until his resignation in 1947.

In retrospect, the key decisions which enabled the merger at Salisbury had been made individually by pastors and congregations over the preceding decades. Basically they flowed from an increased sense of Lutheran distinctiveness in faith and worship. The use of Luther's portrait on the new synodical seal is significant. Dr. Andrew G. Voigt at Southern Seminary inspired future pastors with zeal for traditional Lutheran theology. Congregations had begun to observe the seasons of the Church Year. Lent and Holy Week, not prominent in the 19th century, received increased attention after 1903. Scores of churches remodeled their chancels, replacing central pulpits with altars. Synodical guidance also encouraged a more "churchly" ar-



Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Lincolnton, 1920

chitecture. In 1927 the Committee on Church Architecture put it bluntly. Churches should be built "not like a Theatre or Courthouse, but like a Sanctuary, designed so that the Congregation may more effectively become aware of the presence of God Lutheran Church Buildings are to be 'Sermons in Stone,' 'Gothic Hallelujahs' which are to bear testimony to the passers-by, that here is God's place of business, His headquarters, His Earthly Capitol Churches should be so constructed that intelligent folk will not be compelled to stop and ask, 'Well, what kind of building is that?'. . ."

The Committee went on to give some advice on the particular problem of cornerstones: "Church cornerstones should be readable at a reasonable distance. This is an age of publicity, and advertising. Folk want to know. And they want to learn as they go. Cornerstones in some Lutheran Churches are difficult to decipher, and confusing. It's necessary in some cases to fall on your knees to read the inscription, and they are unintelligent when you have read them. For example, 'St. Lethargy E. L. Church' doesn't mean anything to 60 percent of the public. Or 'St. Somnia's Ev. Lutheran Church.' The 'Ev.' in some cases may more truthfully be said to mean 'Eventually' Lutheran rather than Evangelically Lutheran. The words should be written out in full and not abbreviated."

Another binding force among the congregations of both synods in North Carolina had been the call for a united response to the needs of the First World War. At first, Lutherans, along with most Americans, supported President Wilson's efforts for neutrality. The strong German background of many Lutherans made sympathy with Germany easier than alliance with England. When the United States entered the war, however, North Carolina Lutherans supported their government with men and money. A committee of the synod urged in 1918, "That we call attention to our history and genius for loyalty and willingness to support our great government under whose principles and protection we enjoy religious liberty, and that we preserve our loyalty untarnished." The synod published a list of congregations, showing the men sent from each, together with an accounting of funds contributed to the Soldiers and Sailors Relief Fund. The president of synod, in his report for that same year, noted "the fearful carnage of men and the destruction of property" which the war had brought, and the memory of those dreadful years would linger in the minds of Lutherans for more than a generation.

The postwar reaction brought its own set of problems for the newly-united synod to face. President Morgan reviewed the issues in 1920: "This has been a year of continued unrest in the commercial world, and one of many disquieting problems for the Church. God has blessed us with bountiful harvests, and has multiplied industrial machinery in all parts of our land, and yet the people are not satisfied.

Strikes and lockouts have been more prevalent and wider in their scope than ever in the history of our country. Such conditions reveal an evident lack of confidence. People seem to be becoming lovers of gain rather than lovers of God. But what is more alarming to us, is the fact that the religious census of the year 1919 in this country shows a decided weakening, and in some communions an actual loss of membership" Over in Europe, we are told, are multitudes of men, women and children who are actually dying for the lack of food and clothing for their bodies. And among those unfortunate ones are thousands of our own brethren in the faith." The challenge was massive; the synod plunged into a whirlwind of programs to cope with the needs on every level from local to international. "The two outstanding objectives for our own local Synod, as it appears to us, are Home Missions and Education," announced President Morgan in 1925. The record testifies that these two programs did indeed become the chief concerns of the synod.

In 1907 there were six congregations on mission status in the synod; by 1923 the number had reached nineteen. Industry was moving into the state, and mills in Landis and Kannapolis were attracting workers from the countryside. The need for supervision of these new missions required more than one man, so N. D. Yount and S. White Rhyne shared the task as Western and Eastern Field Missionaries. More money was needed, too. As early as 1920, President Morgan had warned the synod that "it must either spend more money and exert greater energy in this business, or it must suffer a decline in growth and expansion." He asked for an endowment fund for home missions of \$50,000. Laymen, challenged by W. K. Mauney of Kings Mountain, doubled that goal. In 1923 they agreed to secure \$100 per year for ten years from 100 laymen for a Loan and Gift Fund. Thirty-nine pledges came in the first year and more followed, but financial pressures during the Depression hindered fulfillment of the pledges. In the meantime, interest from the funds which had been contributed helped in financing of mission congregations.

Educational interests demanded much time and attention. The long battle for Mount Pleasant Collegiate Institute and Mont Amoena Seminary finally ended in defeat. State standards for junior colleges required more of the two schools than finances would allow. Additional money could not be found, because other institutions also needed help. Lenoir-Rhyne, stimulated by the Rhyne gift in 1922, was trying to raise another \$550,000. The seminary was seeking \$300,000 from its supporting synods, and there were a host of other appeals for European refugees, care for the aged, and the Orphans' Home in Virginia. Members of synod, though generous, could not keep up with all the needs. A last-ditch "Pay Up Campaign" in 1927 did not bring enough money to keep the Mount Pleasant schools open, so work there

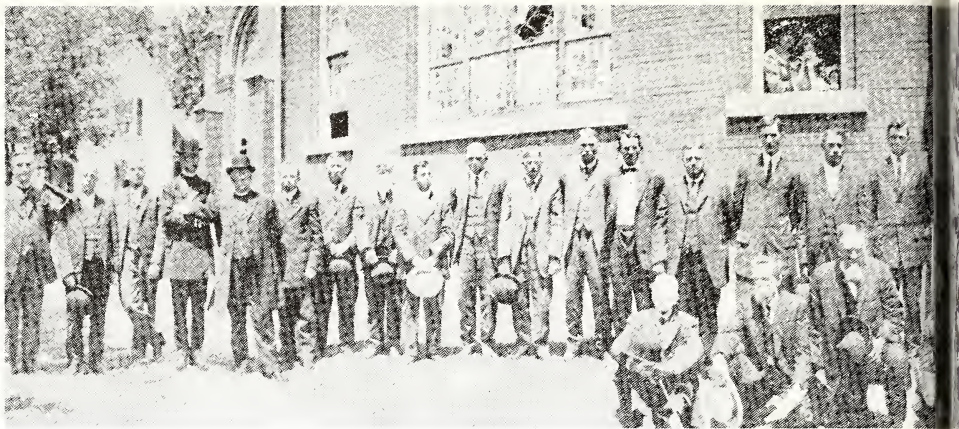
came to an end.

Missions and education did not exhaust the desire of the synod for new programs. An effort to maintain some work among Black Lutherans had ceased in 1902, when the Black congregation in Charlotte affiliated with the Joint Synod of Ohio. However, occasional questions were raised in the later decades about renewing work in this field. No sustained effort was made. Another project that did bear fruit, however, concerned "an assembly ground in such part of Western North Carolina as may be selected for the holding of assemblies, conventions, conferences, public worship, religious, missionary and educational schools, and all similar endeavors." The vision of a summer assembly went back at least to 1908, with the idea of purchasing land added in 1918. From the beginning the project included several synods, especially those in North and South Carolina. Interest first focused on Vade Mecum Springs, then on Blowing Rock or Marion. The depression suspended plans, but renewed prosperity in the 1940's revived interest in the project. In the meantime, the popular summer programs for church workers continued to meet at Mount Pleasant or at Hickory.

There seemed to be no end to causes, pleas, appeals and programs. "We would call attention to the fact that for the current year more than \$80,000 has been received by the Treasurer in amounts ranging from 20 cents up," reported a committee in 1923. The synod had moved far from its early role as referee in disputes between congregations and ministers. It now served chiefly as the channel through which funds could be raised for projects which were too ambitious for a single congregation to assume. "We are living in the days of large things . . . large needs, large opportunities," an observer had written in 1910.

The volume of money and activity obviously demanded some adjustments in the operation of the synod. Early in the century it had resolved that pastors and congregations "ought to regulate the business and material affairs of the church with the same system and vigilance that the man of business sagacity applies to his personal affairs." The "businesslike" theme dominated thinking; an address on stewardship bore the title: "The King's Business and My Business." A committee on efficiency for the synod suggested changes which would pack more activity into the annual conventions. Artificial light permitted adding an evening session to the traditional morning-and-afternoon format. Representatives of institutions found their time cut back to twenty minutes. Parochial reports were to be sent by mail instead of brought (and read) to the convention.

Increased business also required increased staff. Soon after 1900 a statistical secretary was elected to care for the ever more complex parochial reports — "pious guesses," he called them. Then, after fif-



Synod convention, 1914, Mac

teen years of argument, the office of president became full-time and salaried. Small stipends were also given to the secretary and treasurer, as tokens of their heavier duties. Mission work, as we have seen, employed two full-time directors. Beyond these elected officials ranged a small army of volunteer and appointed positions. As early as 1922 the synod listed twenty-four standing committees, ten special committees, and five boards. Its minutes took 171 pages to print. By 1923, the "North Carolina Lutheran" appeared to help inform church members about the work of the synod.

Not only did the synod officers become full-time, but pastors, too, devoted more time to their parishes and less time to outside employment. In earlier years most ministers had to work as farmers, teachers, or tradesmen in order to supplement their salaries. By 1912 the synod was discouraging such secular employment. Two years later it reprimanded three ministers who were devoting too much time to outside interests. At the same time, the synod urged higher salaries for its clergy. In 1908 the recommended figure was at least six hundred dollars. By 1920 the minimum had doubled to \$1,200, plus parsonage. Synod President Morgan was making \$2,500 that same year. Four years later a survey of the synod revealed that the average salary was \$1,536.68. The steady upward surge over many years is a good index of the generous spirit and the financial strength of North Carolina congregations.

A nagging issue continued to elude solution. How should the synod raise all the money needed? How could the increasing financial burden be spread equally among the congregations? The first part of the question concerned methods; the second involved apportionment.



Lutheran Church, Burlington

Both apportioning and special fund-raising were employed by the synod, but there were advocates who wanted to settle on one system or the other. "Canvasses" and "campaigns" by one or two traveling agents occurred every year — and sometimes there were several agents crisscrossing the state at the same time. In 1914 a committee urged the end of all such "efforts to collect money for beneficence from our people or congregations otherwise than by apportionments" Three years later, however, receipts had fallen far below expenses. A "card system" was suggested, which involved each council signing a pledge on the amount of apportionment that it was "able and willing to pay." Complicated formulas for apportionment developed, including factors for current expenses, previous giving records, "net gain" in members, and expenditures for construction. Finally, the ultimate combination of fund-raising and apportionment was discovered when a Thanksgiving Canvass reached all the congregations with a "special appeal" to meet their assigned apportionment.

One great asset to the synod lay in the increasing popularity and effectiveness of its auxiliaries. At the time of merger in 1921, the North Carolina Women's Missionary Society was thirty-six years old, and the Tennessee Synod Society had a history of eight years. Together they were able to expand all their work and to intensify efforts to establish societies in every congregation. By 1927 women's organizations had contributed \$203,000 toward missionary activities.

Not only did the women contribute money; they also found in missionary work an opportunity for full-time church service. The Powlas sisters, Maude and Annie, became pioneer missionaries in Japan. Miss Clara Sullivan, who had been a leader in producing

PER CENTUM PAID ON APPORTIONMENT—Continued

WESTERN CONFERENCE

PARISH AND CONGREGATION	1920-21	1921-22	1922-23	1923-24	1924-26	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930
Alexander—Friendship	44	66	39	59	35	33½	40	32	28	27
Alexander—St. John's	...	0	30	+	37	40½	0	43	23	30
Alexander—St. Mark's	...	0	25	+	100	+	0	100	100	+
Alexander—Shiloh	20	0	0	+	33	+	0	71	67	28
Andrews—St. Andrew's	...	0	0	+	100	100	100	100	100	100
Asheville—St. Mark's	...	+	81	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
China Grove—Grace	+	+	100	51	48	48	0	10	7	0
China Grove—Prosperity	97	79	20½	72	12	15	15	6	6	0
Claremont—Mt. Calvary	...	41	100	100½	100½	100	100½	100	100	100
Claremont—St. Luke's	+	+	+	+	43	12½	23	27	13	0
Claremont—Salem	...	20	0	+	14	+	31	16	16	16
East Hickory—Mt. Olive	...	100	93	100	85	100	100	100	100	46
East Hickory—St. Stephen's	...	100	93	100	85	100	100	100	100	81
Enochville—St. Enoch's	27	68	78	71	75	70	75	54	29	19
Enochville—Trinity	42	25	31	57	8	0	12	31	22	8
Good Hope—Bethel	...	0	0	0	+	100	100	100	100	100
Good Hope—Good Hope	...	0	0	100	75½	100	100	100	100	74
Granite Falls—Philadelphia	...	50	82	0	75½	100	100	100	100	100
Granite Falls—St. John's	...	54	92	55	27½	70	100	100	100	100
Granite Falls—St. Matthew's	21	50	100	100	54½	47	76	58	+	28
Haven—Haven	100	96½	85	87	75	+	45	60	56	37
Hendersonville—Grace Memorial	...	100	83	100	+	100	100	50½	100	100
Hickory—Holy Trinity	...	93	+	88	95	100	100	100	100	89
Hildebran—Calvary	...	...	96	50	+	+	+	+	+	+
Hildebran—Mt. Hebron	...	100	86	70	100	38	20½	+	0	82
Hildebran—St. Paul's	...	33	100	72	63	54	14	+	56	71
Iredell—Mt. Hermon	...	58	33	+	+	18	9	24½	19	0
Iredell—Sharon	32	46	+	+	+	5	10	+	+	+
Landis—Concordia	90	108	53	63	89	123	100	58	50½	69
Landis—Trinity	100	144	99	108	86	47	50½	45½	40½	15
Lebanon—Amity	...	...	...	...	...	41	60	36	40	26
Lebanon—Lebanon	59	+	+	+	+	100	69	100	100	42
Lebanon—Providence	+	+	+	+	+	0	100	100	100	100
Lebanon—St. Matthew's	100	48	48½	+	61½	61	0	100	100	77
Lenoir—St. John's	...	...	...	...	10	21	26	100	100	100
Lenoir—St. Stephen's	59	68	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Maiden—Luther's Chapel	50	62	75	40	37	18	44	43	48	54
Maiden—St. Martin's	41	47	80	100	100	35	63	72	85	64
Maiden—Salem	66	6	100	100	81	80	80	56	92	56
Mooreville—St. Mark's	100	100	100	100	90	100	100	100	100	100
Newton—Beth Eden	...	97	82	84	81	77	65	64	56	37
Newton—St. Timothy's	29	100	89	54	60	64	95	100	72	62
North Kannapolis—Bethany	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	96
Rowan—Mt. Moriah	54	49	+	+	+	72	72½	49½	45½	41
Rowan—St. Mark's	...	45	75	75	13½	40	+	0	9	3
Salem—Salem	100	74½	100	36	82	72	78	100	67	39
Spencer—Calvary	100	76	80	60	47	70	58	87	97	20
Spencer—Christ's Church	39	86½	60½	57½	47	58	52	46	40	27
Statesville—St. John's	100	98	+	95	62	56	67	66	67	33
St. Andrews—St. Andrew's	...	118	92	79	66	73	+	38	+	39
St. James', Newton—Ebenezer	...	100	100	100	41	59	73	68	68	54
St. James', Newton—St. James'	...	100	97	100	100	63	100	100	100	63
St. John's, Salisbury—St. John's	29	100	42	42	96½	89½	100½	50	26½	35
St. Luke's—St. Luke's	100	100	100	100	100	0	58	51	100	73½
St. Mark's, C. G.—St. Mark's	92	100	80	+	72	66	66	100	87½	70
Troutman—Holy Trinity	...	0	0	0	0	0	76½	69	77	34
Troutman—St. Paul's	100	100	80	62	0	0	78½	100	100	50
Watauga—Holy Trinity	100	100	100	0	43	59	93	100	69	61
Watauga—Mt. Pleasant	26	100	+	100	44	33	43	37	44	35
Watauga—Mt. Zion	80	100	60	50	+	100	37	7	+	+
Watauga—Old Mt. Pleasant	...	...	0	+	+	14	45	57	50	+
Watauga, Boone—Grace	...	0	0	0	0	100	100	100	99	56
Watauga, Boone—St. Mark's	...	0	0	0	0	56	100	43	66	44
West Hickory—Bethany	...	19	19	25	0½	13	+	11	0	8
Zion—Bethlehem	...	39	86	80	52½	53	53	17	70	45
Zion—New Jerusalem	...	67	82	94	81½	100	79	63	62	38
Zion—Zion	...	43	55	52	+	76	64	51	46	4

*—Congregation not yet Organized.

†—No Report.

‡—Unusual Heavy Expense.

§—Vacancy.

Apportionment report for 1932



PAST PRESIDENTS: FRONT ROW (left to right): Mrs. E. R. Trexler, Mt. Pleasant, N. C., 1940-43; Mrs. Aubrey Mauney, Kings Mountain, N. C., 1943-46; Mrs. G. W. McClanahan, Salem, Va., 1922-25; 1934-37; Mrs. J. H. C. Fisher, Mt. Pleasant, N. C., 1896-1898; Mrs. E. R. Lineberger (current President) Spencer, N. C., 1949-

BACK ROW: Mrs. M. Craig Yoder, Hickory, N. C., 1946-1949; Mrs. J. F. Crigler, Charlotte, N. C., 1928-31; Mrs. J. A. Moretz, Hickory, N. C., 1931-34; Mrs. J. L. Morgan, Salisbury, N. C., 1925-28; Mrs. L. E. Blackwelder, White Rock, S. C., 1937-40; Mrs. John M. Cook, Concord, N. C., 1917-1919; 1921-1922.

mission study materials in North Carolina followed her words with action and was sent to China as the first missionary totally supported by the North Carolina Women. Later Dr. Gladys Morgan went to India as a medical missionary, and Misses Virginia Adderholt and Catherine Stirewalt accepted appointments to Japan and China.

Membership in the United Luthran Church in America required some changes in the program of the Women's Missionary Society in North Carolina after 1920. Most of the money raised went to the national organization for the support of mission activity at home and overseas. Local projects ultimately received about twenty percent of all funds collected. On the other hand, North Carolina benefited from projects sponsored within the state by the ULCA Women's Missionary Society. "Mountain missions" were one of the national projects, and work in Watauga County was begun under that program. The popular work in Konnarock, Virginia, also started as a ULCA program.

A clear example of national influence within the synod can be seen in the history of children's work. Originally a project of the synodical missionary societies to involve children in mission study and support, the "Children's Missionary Society" took the name of the national auxiliary, "Light Brigade", after formation of the ULCA. Three age

divisions, the "Little Lights," the "Lamplighters," and the "Torchbearers" learned about children in other parts of the world and contributed pennies and dimes to a milk fund for their benefit. In the later 1930's the national program broadened beyond mission education to include a regular weekday Christian Education format, so the organization changed its name to "Children of the Church."

Youth work also was unified and broadened under the ULCA. Before their merger in 1921, both the North Carolina Synod and the Tennessee Synod had a few youth groups, called "Girls' Guilds," "Luther Leagues," or "Young Peoples' Societies." As in the case of children's work, most of these organizations were closely tied to the Women's Missionary Society. The young peoples' desire for an independent organization almost coincided with the formation of the ULCA and the merger of 1921, so that by 1923 the Luther League in North Carolina had its own officers and nearly eighty local leagues. Its program included recreation, study, worship, and support of all synodical institutions. In addition to regular contributions to home and foreign missions, and the Southern Seminary library the Luther Leagues held special drives for the Lowman Home for the Aged and for scholarships for foreign students studying at Lenoir Rhyne College.

Missionary interests also stimulated formation of a men's auxiliary in the state through the establishment of the Lutheran Laymen's Missionary Movement just before the first World War. After the formation of the ULCA the term "Brotherhood" came into popular use. President Morgan was a strong advocate of the Brotherhood idea, and he found enthusiastic response, first in the Kings Mountain-Gastonia area and eventually throughout the state. Although the national Brotherhood emphasized scouting, evangelism, and home missions, in North Carolina the challenge of home missions remained paramount. By 1931 the Loan and Gift Fund began to help mission congregations, and the men of the synod gave it continuous and energetic support. In 1947 the original goal of \$100,000 was realized, but instead of setting the project aside as "completed," the men began to talk of even higher goals. In World War II, Lutheran World Action would also become an especially successful project of the Brotherhood.

Few other synods developed auxiliaries as effectively as North Carolina. Lay involvement, pastoral encouragement, and synodical leadership combined to bring the auxiliaries to unequalled achievements. In the 1940's the North Carolina Brotherhood, under the leadership of Zeb B. Trexler, became the largest state-wide unit in the United Lutheran Church. In the same decade synodical offerings through the Children of the Church led all other Lutheran synods. The Luther League had provided national officers and, in 1951, Ray Cline

was elected President. The Women's Missionary Society under the vigorous leadership of capable officers, trebled its membership and contributions between 1936 and 1951. These active auxiliaries made possible the astounding expansion of programs and institutional support which distinguished the North Carolina Synod in the first half of this century.

Progress, of course, was not automatic. The business-like mood and the financial successes of the early 1900's made the Depression years even more devastating to the spirit of the synod than to its institutions. Accumulated debts closed Mount Pleasant Collegiate Institute, and President Morgan reported to the 1931 Synod convention that the synod was in debt. The Executive Committee was authorized to borrow up to \$3,000 to cover its obligations. Income dropped as congregations found it impossible to raise their apportioned amounts. Voluntary contributions through auxiliaries also dropped. The Luther League raised less than half as much money in 1933 as it had seven years earlier. Despite renewed stewardship efforts benevolence income continued to shrink as congregations kept their dwindling contributions to meet local current expenses. Pastors' salaries for 1933 were reported to be "far below former reports." Loans for new buildings had been obtained in more optimistic days, and the synod had great difficulty in meeting all of those obligations. As a result fewer new mission congregations could be organized. Only six congregations came into existence in the 1930's — a figure which barely equaled the number of congregations organized in 1923 alone.

Difficulty in founding new congregations led the synod to an increased emphasis on evangelism by existing congregations. President Morgan urged action "while people are realizing their helpless state of life" both for their benefit and for the additional resources they would bring to the church. "The business man realizes these principles" he said, "then why should the children of this world be wiser than the children of light?" In 1932 the Committee on Evangelism recommended week-long evangelistic services with the following "mechanical aids": "(1) Invite cooperation of all the church organizations, (2) Compile a list of inactive, non-member attenders, and unchurched people, (3) Invite a fellow-pastor to preach the sermons, (4) Publicize from pulpit and in the newspaper two to four weeks in advance, (5) Distribute handbills house-to-house, giving name of preacher, topics, and 'any local musical organization,' (6) Have Song Leader if possible. Use familiar hymns, (7) Have Committee of Ushers. See that building is comfortable. Take offering one night to defray expenses, (8) Confine service to one hour. Have every night for everybody, (9) Aim to stimulate but not to satisfy; to create desire for spiritual food but to give only a taste; to conserve the interest and direct into the channel of the regular church services."

Evangelism efforts may have accounted for the unusually good growth of the synod after the initial shock of the Depression. During most of the 1930's synodical growth averaged over 1000 members per year. With the outbreak of World War II in 1941, the statistics faltered a little, but the average increase remained over 660 annually.

World War II affected synodical life in a variety of ways. In addition to at least five pastors who entered the chaplaincy, over 5,500 men and women served in the armed forces. Each year during the war, the synod minutes would carry a lengthening list of those members who had been lost in action. By the end of war it stretched over three pages, containing 186 names. An annual memorial service during the synodical convention honored these persons, and a special Memorial Fund to help with the construction of a larger St. Andrew's Church in Hickory gave visible expression to the gratitude of those for whom the sacrifices had been made.

Since Japan and China had been mission fields of special interest to North Carolina Lutherans, the safety of missionaries was a continuing concern. Just before the war began, most missionaries were recalled or remained home on furlough, but five single lady missionaries were still on the field. In addition, three missionaries, Dr. O. J. Stirewalt and Dr. and Mrs. C. W. Hepner, voluntarily chose to remain in Japan. Within a year these three were brought home under an exchange agreement with the Japanese, and Dr. Grady Cooper also was repatriated from China. Finally in December of 1943, Clara Sullivan, Catherine Stirewalt, and others arrived safely from China. All of those missionaries set to work at once on plans for more effective activity after the war, and in the meantime they visited congregations with first-hand reports of Christian bravery under persecution.

Many other problems arose from wartime shortages and inflation. Home mission executives declared that building of new churches was "out for the duration." Gas rationing curtailed committee meetings, and even the synod had to obtain permission from the Office of Defense Transportation in order to hold its 1945 convention. The crisis was so severe that the synod gave emergency powers to its Executive Board in case the synod could not meet the following year. Church treasurers had to learn how to handle the "victory tax" on certain transactions, and seminarians were granted an extra fifty dollars per year to cover higher living costs.

In spite of the uncertainties and difficulties, the synod benefited from an upsurge in giving unprecedented in its history. In each of the war years the congregations all paid their synodical apportionment in full and they gave generously to Lutheran World Action for refugees, military service projects, and orphaned missions. In 1947, the year of Dr. Morgan's retirement as synod president, the synod broke all

previous records for giving, not only meeting all local obligations, but also paying its full apportionment to the United Lutheran Church in America for the first time.

In retrospect, the synod changed more dramatically between 1903 and 1947 than it had in any previous period of similar length. The longed-for reunion and merger in 1921, the vigorous growth of auxiliaries, the high annual increase in membership and giving, the perfection of the committee systems, and the establishment of a full-time presidency would have been distinctive enough, but the synod also joined in forming a national church body and thus delegated some of its powers to a more inclusive agency. The implications of this move were to become clearer in the following decades.

IV

"To Assist the Congregations"

1947 - 1978

Dr. Jacob Morgan installed the Rev. Voigt Cromer, D. D., his successor, as president of synod on July 6, 1947. Dr. F. L. Conrad, Secretary of Synod, preached the sermon. That cluster of leaders symbolized the course of synod history during the following years, since many of the trends characterizing Dr. Morgan's long administration continued through the terms of Dr. Cromer and his successor, Dr. Conrad.

The Rev. Voigt Rhodes Cromer, a son and grandson of Lutheran ministers, had come out of the Tennessee Synod tradition and had served parishes in South Carolina, Lincolnton, Concord, and Hickory before being elected to succeed Dr. Morgan. His term was a brief one, because Lenoir-Rhyne College called him back to Hickory as its president, after he had served only two years as the president of synod. His own interest in higher education, family ties with the college over three generations, his many years of service on the Lenoir-Rhyne board made leadership of the college an almost inevitable channel for his talents.

The synod then chose as its third full-time president the Rev. Flavius Leslie Conrad, D. D., pastor of Emmanuel Lutheran Church in High Point and Secretary of the Synod for the previous twelve years. Dr. Conrad had been ordained by the Tennessee Synod. Most of his parish ministry had been at Emmanuel, but had also been very active in the work of the synod. He was heartily committed to the home missionary tradition of Dr. Morgan's administration, and circumstances permitted him to fulfill many of the dreams which had been thwarted by the depression and the war years.

The period between the end of World War II and 1960 saw unprecedented growth in North Carolina. Industry moved into the state, bringing with it Lutherans from the north and the mid-west. The economy flourished. Building funds soared, releasing a construction boom that affected nearly every parish. In the 1950's seventy-five new churches, educational buildings or "first units" of missions were built,

plus fifty more renovation and improvement projects. Congregations had enough capital left over to buy or build over one hundred parsonages.

The influx of Lutherans had its greatest impact on the spread of mission work across the state. In 1955 the synod was developing 27 mission points from Boone to Kinston.

The most dramatic growth occurred in suburbs and towns where new industries built plants and transferred in personnel from traditionally Lutheran areas. During the first decade of Dr. Conrad's presidency twenty congregations were organized, half of them in counties where no Lutheran church had previously existed. In addition many multiple-church parishes divided into self-supporting congregations, thus strengthening the synod in its home territory. From the beginning of Dr. Cromer's presidency in 1947 to the end of Dr. Conrad's administration in 1962, the number of baptized Lutherans in the synod increased by over 22,000 — nearly a 50% increase. No other period in the synod's history could approach that record of building, expansion, and growth.

Behind the impressive figures moved the energies of the North Carolina Synod Brotherhood. From its organization it had been dedicated to the cause of home missions. Although it took more than twenty years to raise its first \$100,000 for loans and gifts to new congregations, the Brotherhood doubled that amount by 1957 and doubled it again seven years later. Up to one-third of the cost of new construction in the 50's was furnished by that unique resource. Looking back, President Conrad recalled the roles of many men who had kept the fund growing: "Dr. Jacob L. Morgan, fervently mission-minded, who suggested the idea; Judge Bismarck Capps, first president and jovial counselor; W. K. Mauney, forthright, alert and ready to go with 'We can do it, men'; Arthur W. Fisher, pleading for more congregational Brotherhoods, more gifts and mission churches in every county in the State; Harry E. Isenhour, zealously talking it up, and telling other synods to 'get with it'; Joe C. Ridenhour, with programs, films and slides showing the fields and the needs; Leon Rivers, with his Handbook of Information and Directives; Aubrey Mauney, plugging for boys and the Boy Scouts; Leonard Moretz, watching the treasury and dispensing the funds; James Hillary Frye and the Rev. W. B. Aull providing generous gifts." Through the efforts of these leaders and many others the Loan and Gift Fund grew to the point where a Home Mission Foundation was chartered to administer it. The Fund became the symbol of synodical dedication to mission and stewardship.

So successful was this effort to enter new fields and build new churches that the synod faced a shortage of ministers. Although a record number of students (13) had been ordained in 1955, demand con-

tinued to outrun supply. A "Full-time Christian Service Promotion" was organized in 1959, with summer rallies to encourage young people to consider church-related vocations. Southern Seminary began a biennial "Seminary Day" the following year, so that high school and college students might have a personal introduction to theological education. The recruitment programs proved successful, but although the annual number of seminary graduates increased to 25 by 1970, the pleas from vacant congregations continued. These and other congregations looked beyond synodical borders for ministers who would move to North Carolina and help fill empty pulpits or staff positions. The number of out-of-state clergy became great enough to prompt the inauguration of a series of workshops to help acquaint newcomers with the work of synod. There seemed to be more than enough for everyone to do.

Amid all this growth it is surprising to discover that the synod was acutely worried over its statistics. The membership was increasing, but a visiting churchman pointed out that it was not increasing as fast as the state's population — so the synod was actually losing ground! President Conrad called it "dying statistically." Attempting to reverse this trend, the synod created a number of special evangelism programs: The Preaching-Reaching-Teaching Missions, Area Evangelism Missions, New Life Missions, Witnessing in Daily Life, "Witness Where You Are" and Key '73. Some of these ideas were adopted by the United Lutheran Church for use throughout the country. Other formats grew out of church-wide planning most notably the biennial "Carolinas Evangelism Conference" held in Charlotte for Lutherans in North and South Carolina. The first Carolinas Evangelism Conference was organized in 1965, and the format still was popular in 1978. Other direct evangelistic work was being done by the adoption of radio-and later TV-ministries.

No one can estimate the effectiveness of these programs, because despite all the creativity and interest, the statistics continued to slump. Perhaps if there had been no programs at all the synod would have experienced a numerical loss in members; as it was, the numbers continued to inch upward, but at a frustrating, slow rate. "While more has been done in the last four years than ever before," reported the synod's Evangelism Committee in 1959, "it is paradoxical that the gains in the North Carolina Synod the past two years have been the least of any two-year period of the last decade." Among the explanations proposed for this apparent lack of results was President Conrad's suggestion that inadequate attention was being given to maintaining members once they had joined. "The back door of the church seems to be open too wide," he said, "and the front door, perhaps, not wide enough."

It is obvious that members were being challenged to give their ut-

most in support of synodical causes. Home missions led the list, with about half of all the money given to synod in the 1950's going for church extension. In addition Lenoir-Rhyne, the seminary, Lutheridge, and a new church headquarters building in Salisbury were the objects of special fund-raising campaigns in all congregations. During that decade there was always one special appeal before the people, and during one year three campaigns were conducted at the same time. Then, in 1958, the United Lutheran Church asked all its synods to double their contributions to its benevolence program. The synod had accepted a similar challenge back in 1948, and had increased its benevolence by 167% in one year. 1958 was more difficult. In the years just past the synod's budget had soared at a rate approaching 11% per year. Add to that the special appeals which netted more than a million and a half dollars for institutions, plus a 100% record on apportioned benevolence to the ULCA, and one begins to wonder how much more could be expected. Members dug deeper, however, and brought the synod within 25% of its doubled goal. Excluding special campaigns, the total given for all causes in 1958 was \$649,121 — three times the giving level a decade earlier.

Not only was the synod generous with traditional causes — missions, Lenoir-Rhyne, and the seminary, but it also increased its program by opening an assembly ground and camp and moving strongly into campus ministry at non-Lutheran colleges.

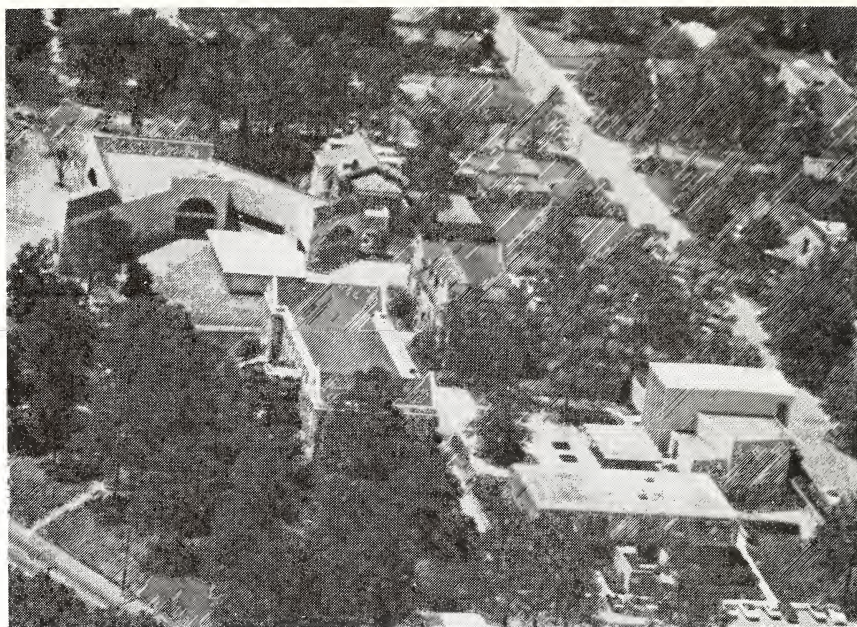
The vision of a church camp had captivated the imaginations of some North Carolina Lutherans since 1918. Experience with summer programs for church school workers demonstrated the need for assembly grounds, and other southern synods expressed interest in cooperative ownership. Property near Asheville was purchased in 1946, and the next year it was named "Lutheridge." The Rev. J. Lewis Thornburg became its first Executive Director. Soon donations were being requested, buildings began to rise and a summer camping session was organized under Dr. Thornburg and his successors, the Rev. Dexter Moser, the Rev. Brady Faggart, and the Rev. Robert Troutman. Lutheridge's program expanded steadily. The first summer session lasted only seven weeks, but soon the entire summer was occupied with camping and educational programs for all ages, including special weeks for Church music, for the mentally retarded, and for senior citizens. The building of Kohn-Joy Inn in 1964 permitted year-round use, so weekend conferences became more popular in the winter months. Lutheridge also provided private lots for summer homes, camping places for tents and trailers, and picnic facilities for day visitors. In 1953 about 1500 persons enrolled in Lutheridge programs; by 1973 the participant roll had grown to over 10,000. Most of the funds for the property and buildings were obtained through the untiring individual solicitation efforts of Dr. Thornburg and his successors.



Whisnout Memorial Chapel, Lutheridge, under construction

Sale of private lots, which cost between \$450 and \$750 in 1950, helped a little. Only one general funding campaign was held in North Carolina and the other supporting synods; North Carolina, as usual, met its quota.

Another area of ministry which developed rapidly concerned ministry to students attending non-Lutheran colleges and universities. Campus ministry had been carried on by pastors of congregations near these schools, but the expansion in higher education after World War II presented a challenge that could hardly be met on a part-time basis. Full-time work was begun at Duke University in 1951, and appropriations from the synod for campus ministry climbed tenfold between 1952 and 1975. In addition, special campaigns raised money for a facility at Raleigh to serve North Carolina State College, and for a church at Chapel Hill to serve the University of North Carolina. A congregational appeal in 1966 called CAMPUS provided over \$200,000 for additional facilities throughout the state. These rising costs reflected a widened sense of responsibility on the part of the synod. No longer did Lutherans expect that all students would attend Lenoir-Rhyne; they recognized that an increasing percentage of their young people would attend other private or state in-



Lutheran Southern Theological Seminary

stitutions, and they determined that the ministry of the church would be there too.

Beyond the borders of North Carolina other events also affected the life of the synod in profound ways. The decades between 1947 and 1977 saw the Cold War, the Chinese Revolution, Korea, racial unrest, Vietnam, and several small-scale wars. These disturbances sent ripples into synodical affairs which called forth efforts for relief, resettlement, and readjustment to social issues.

The spread of Communism after World War II threatened America with a frankly atheistic political system which opposed it on the mission field and on the battlefield. Missionaries who had obtained permission to return to China after the Japanese left soon found themselves involved in a new war, this time not of foreign conquest but of domestic revolution. "It has become too late for many in this and other lands who should have shared their plenty," wrote Miss Clara Sullivan from her mission station among "a sea of refugees." She stayed as long as she could, and was among the last to leave in 1951. By that time war had broken out in Korea, and North Carolina Lutherans were sending their sons as well as their offerings overseas. Service centers opened at military bases within the state, and Lenoir-Rhyne college students joined in the ideological struggle by filling bottles with messages of freedom to be floated ashore on the Chinese mainland.

The generous response to the plight of persons displaced by Russian troops from their homes in Eastern Europe continued throughout the period, although the persons helped came from a variety of countries. At first the displaced persons were from the Baltic countries and eastern Germany. Over a thousand of these "D.P.'s" found homes in North Carolina. Then, in the early 70's refugees from Uganda received a new start through the hospitality of Lutherans in the state. As the Vietnam conflict ended, North Carolinians once again sponsored refugees and located jobs for families from Southeast Asia. Over and above this direct aid, the synod helped to collect thousands of pounds of clothing and blankets each year. These gifts were sent by way of Lutheran World Action — later Lutheran World Relief — to victims of earthquake in Guatemala, flood in Pennsylvania, war in Biafra and invasion in Bangladesh. Additional thousands of dollars poured in during 1975-76 to answer the immediate and long-term needs of world hunger.

Closer to home, racial issues occupied much synodical time and attention. Segregation was declared illegal by the Supreme Court in 1954, and by the early 1960's newspapers were reporting sit-ins, freedom rides, and "kneel-ins." In 1965 the Civil Rights Act removed most legal and social barriers to equality for Blacks. Within this historical framework the synod attempted to fulfill a mission for which it had felt a particular responsibility. Perhaps the existence of a Black Lutheran synod on its territory in the days of Reconstruction had something to do with it; perhaps the continuing ministry of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to Blacks at Immanuel College in Greensboro kept the idea alive, but among all the southern synods of the Lutheran Church in America, the North Carolina Synod was the most serious in its efforts to implement inter-racial ministry. At first the proposals suggested work among Blacks by Blacks, but even that concept could not win popular support. A special commission reported in 1954 that congregations were "not yet ready or willing to pay the full price, and accept the full responsibilities which attend such a program." Two years later, however, the synod declared itself "in opposition to the principle and practice of involuntary segregation of races and in support of equal privileges and unrestricted opportunity for all." So read the official record, but there is little evidence that any great change had been effected in the hearts of members between 1954 and 1956. Racial patterns remained pretty much the same. The many other tasks facing the synod made it easy to postpone significant action in this controversial area.

The spectacular growth of Lutheranism in North Carolina, whether measured in congregations, members, contributions, programs, or concerns, presented the synod with an immense challenge. The only full-time officer was President Conrad, and the

only full-time staff salary was for his secretary. A number of other part-time positions — Secretary, Treasurer, and the **North Carolina Lutheran** staff — received honoraria or expenses. Committees were clamoring for additional staff to serve their needs. Parish education needed a Director; and Evangelism Directorship had been approved but never filled. Some felt that a full-time Secretary should be elected. Others called for a youth worker. The Executive Committee appointed an Assistant to the President, hoping that he might be utilized wherever the need was the greatest. In July of 1955, the Rev. Ernest L. Misenheimer accepted the appointment, with special responsibilities in the areas of stewardship and evangelism. Three years later Miss Jane Sigmon became the first synodical Director of Christian Education. These appointments helped to share the leadership tasks of synod, but it became clear that a more thorough study should be done. A "Committee on the Organizational Structure of Synod" (COSS) was given the task of reviewing everything from the Constitution to the location of synodical offices.

When the time came to vote on committee proposals in 1961 staff needs were so acute that the convention did not know which way to turn. The idea of a full-time secretary was rejected, largely because supporters of the home mission cause felt a Mission Superintendent should be the next full-time position. For the same reason, the vacancy for Director of Christian Education could not be filled. Even a proposal for a full-time bookkeeper was deferred until the Superintendent issue could be decided. The convention finally voted to "instruct" the Executive Committee to elect a Superintendent of Home Missions and to develop a job description and salary level. At that point, President Franklin Clark Fry of the United Lutheran Church in America, who was present at the convention, advised the delegates that a new regional organization of the church's mission work would probably make a synodical superintendent unnecessary.

Dr. Fry's comments introduced a factor which would play a significant role in the life of the synod during the next four years. The United Lutheran Church was contemplating a merger with three other North American Lutheran bodies, representing Swedish, Danish, and Finnish traditions. As it turned out, the merger did not change the size of the synod as the previous merger with the Tennessee Synod had done, but it did affect the synod's work in other ways.

The most sensitive issue in the merger, as far as the North Carolina Synod was concerned, was the fate of its thriving home mission program. As early as 1954 the synod felt that "centralizing" tendencies in the United Lutheran Church in America were threatening local initiative. The fears seemed justified two years later, when the ULCA told the synod that its synodical mission program did not suit church-wide mission strategy. Synodical leadership bristled

and suggested ignoring the action. Differences were soon ironed out, but then talk of church-wide merger raised anxieties again.

The Committee on Organizational Structure of Synod, in addition to their work on staff needs, also had the responsibility of recommending a new constitution to the synod. Mindful of the concerns over the Home Mission Foundation and local control of mission work, the Committee's recommended constitution included articles asserting that synod's chief bond was with the local congregation, and that "every other allegiance" was "subordinate" to that local bond. Furthermore, regulation of the financial program was placed in the By-laws, so that it would not be subject to standards imposed on the Constitution itself by the church at large. In this way synod hoped to maintain control of its Home Mission Foundation despite guidelines to the contrary from the United Lutheran Church. A series of conferences with national church officials, consideration at three synodical conventions, and numerous revisions of the Constitution failed to find a solution. Meanwhile the merger creating the Lutheran Church in America crept closer. All merging synods were to have constitutions in agreement with the LCA's Approved Constitution for Synods by the date of the merger, January 1, 1963. The North Carolina Synod was in a quandry. Despite Dr. Fry's warning, it had appointed a Superintendent of Home Missions in the person of the Rev. David Johnson. Yet it did not feel free to reject the merger documents of the LCA and thus place itself in a "schismatic and divisive" position. Chairman John Yost, Jr., of the Committee on Organizational Structure of Synod, had managed to work out a number of differences between the synod and the merging church, but he finally reported that it would be impossible for the synod to have a suitable constitution ready in time for the merger. The synod, in effect, would be operating without a constitution after January, 1963. The revised constitution would serve as "Rules of Procedure" until a constitution acceptable to the LCA could be adopted.

Home Mission strategy was not the only point at issue in 1960-63. Differences with the LCA also existed on matters ranging from the organization of auxiliaries for men, women, and young people, to the name of synod and the age of retirement of its officers. The approved name of synod required the dropping of the term "United" from its title — a reminder of the merger in 1921 — and the adoption of the form "The North Carolina Synod of the Lutheran Church in America." On a more personal level, retirement policies in the LCA made it impossible for Dr. Conrad to continue as synod president.

In a real sense the merger process brought an end to the era of synod life which had begun with the full-time presidency of Dr. Jacob Morgan in 1919. Dr. Morgan himself had died in 1961; the following

year Dr. Conrad, his co-worker and the heir of his policies, stepped down as president.

The period from 1919 to 1962 had begun with the merger of the North Carolina and Tennessee Synods, and its early years had been spent in forging a new spirit of synodical identity. The United Evangelical Lutheran Synod of North Carolina developed a high sense of loyalty and self-initiative. Decades of expansion, home mission development, Loan and Gift Fund promotion and financial growth had followed one another for forty years. The structure of the new Lutheran Church in America, however, demanded a new type of loyalty — not to the synod, but to a continent-wide church body. Social issues of the 60's, too, would bring new priorities and challenges. The synod needed to find leaders who would shape the policies required by these new circumstances.

Although the synod first elected Dr. John Yost, Jr., who had figured prominently in the restructuring process, as its new president, Dr. Yost declined in order to stay in the parish. Synod then turned to the man who had been a strong candidate throughout the balloting, Dr. George R. Whittecar. Dr. Whittecar was serving as pastor of St. James, Concord, but had been President of the Synod of Kansas and Adjacent States and was experienced in the wider work of the church. Dr. Whittecar considered his election to be a decision by the North Carolina Synod to take its place in the LCA as a full partner, rather than as a reluctant by-stander. A new constitution was adopted in 1963 and a new staff structure approved. Dr. Ernest Misenheimer was asked by President Whittecar to stay on as Assistant to the President, and the Rev. Wilford Lyerly became the new full-time synod Secretary. The Rev. Brady Faggart filled the vacant post of Secretary for Christian Education. Even the home mission leadership question found a solution. Superintendent David Johnson was appointed by the LCA's Board of American Missions to serve as its Regional Director for North Carolina and other states, so he maintained his connection with the synod and at the same time represented the regional work of the LCA. Under his leadership the 1960's became a record decade, with 25 missions organized on the territory of the synod.

One problem that did not go away concerned synodical auxiliaries for men, women, and young people. Although the North Carolina Lutheran Church Men, Lutheran Church Women, and Luther League had been among the strongest synodical units in the LCA, they suffered from the general competition for time that all voluntary organizations experienced after 1960. The Lutheran Church Women had always maintained high levels of membership and giving. It probably reached its peak number of members in 1962, when it enrolled 11,085 women. Its contributions for missionary and relief activity reached an annual level of \$96,774 in 1961. Although no great

decline followed, leaders of the LCW found it harder to maintain active circles in congregations where an increasing number of women were becoming employed outside their homes.

The Lutheran Church Men fought an even more strenuous battle for survival. The national organization dissolved in 1966, so North Carolina set up its own "Lutheran Men" as a synodical auxiliary. Their dedication to the Loan and Gift Fund continued, with contributions and bequests raising the principal to over \$1,000,000 by January of 1977. At last in 1972 the long-time dream of a Director for the Lutheran Men became a reality with the employment of the Rev. Walter Yount. In addition to their work for missions, the men also maintained an active Boy Scout program and designated part of their Loan and Gift income as scholarship funds for seminary students. The Luther League, probably the most active synodical youth organization in the LCA, provided national leadership in the youth movement while maintaining a strong program of work camps, caravans, and social ministry projects. LCA policy moved away from a separate youth organization to a concept that would "lift the classification stigma of a youth auxiliary" and replace it with a concept of partnership. The new program, called "Youth Ministry," concentrated on occasional programs, rallies, or projects, rather than on a separate youth organization. Beginning in 1971, "Youth Staffers," young people who give a year to work among the congregations of a synod, have provided the leadership for this program, in collaboration with other members of the synodical staff.

Other changes in synodical programs became necessary in order to adjust to new standards. Participation in the Sipe's Orchard Home for Boys, near Conover, had to be terminated because its method of governance did not fit LCA polity. While not reflecting in any way on the Home or its quality of care, the termination did end a relationship which had been friendly and supportive since the founding of the home in 1945. The other means for synod to help young people had been through the Lutheran Children's Home in Salem, Virginia. That relationship also changed as several sister synods withdrew their support in favor of local care for children. By 1976 a new pattern of cooperation developed in which North Carolina operated its own phase of the Children's Home program.

Civil rights became a central theme of the 60's, and the LCA urged its synods to initiate programs which would foster inter-racial understanding. North Carolina participated in this effort by introducing a wide program for "Justice and Social Change." The program set up sessions in which Whites and Blacks exchanged views on a deeper level than had been customary with inter-racial committees and planning meetings. Although controversial at first, the Justice and Social Change programs helped to overcome some

stereotypes and fears. A significant milestone was passed in 1972 when the synod received an inter-racial congregation organized in Greensboro. Later the synod joined efforts to promote self-help among minority businesses in the state. The steps in themselves seem small, but their symbolic value was immense. Within the space of fifteen years deeply held social values had been changed, and the synod's historic mission with Blacks had been resumed.

Other controversial social issues faced the synod during the latter years of the Vietnam war. Every year a resolution on the war, on Indian affairs, the status of women or capital punishment would be presented by a group of delegates or by a committee. It is characteristic of the variety of opinion present in the synod that the resolutions invariably sparked heated debate. Some were tabled, some passed. Most were heavily amended, often in a way that would completely reverse their intention. A resolution against capital punishment in 1974 was finally replaced by one which opposed only the mandatory death sentence for certain crimes. It is clear, however, that social issues had come to have much more significance for the synod, and that Lutherans considered synodical guidance to be important in the formation of opinion on questions of current concern.

In spite of the fact that there were many changes to face, the synod did not desert its traditional commitments. Originally founded as an aid in the support and certification of pastors, it continued to see pastoral support as one of its major concerns. Pastoral counseling and continuing education for pastors and other professional leaders were given increasing attention. In 1968 the synod declared that \$5,600 should be the minimum salary for its pastors, and in succeeding years the minimum climbed to \$9,000 by 1977. Funds to assist congregations which could not reach this minimum became a part of synod's annual budget. Preparation of clergy also continued to be a priority item. Two major fund-raising programs by Southern Seminary, one in 1959 for buildings and another in 1973 for endowment, received strong support in North Carolina. In fact, attempts to meet its many requests from institutions and committees led the synod to adopt a policy on financial campaigns that permitted only one appeal to congregations on a synod-wide basis at one time, and only one such general campaign every three years. Of course, individual contributions were solicited by all institutions at all times, and this practice was expressly permitted — in response to a question from Lutheridge — when the over-all campaign policy was adopted in 1965.

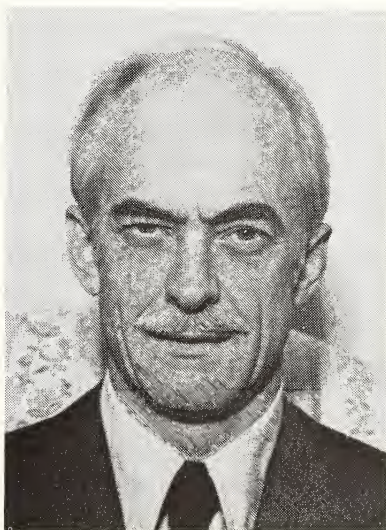
In addition to concern for its pastors, the synod continued strong in support of its college. In 1957 Lenoir-Rhyne became the legal successor to North Carolina College, thus officially offering the completion of a thirty-year process of merging the two educational strands in North Carolina Lutheranism. Enthusiastic support from the synod

Recent Presidents of Lenoir-Rhyne College

Reverend Voigt R. Cromer, 1950 - 1968



Dr. Raymond M. Bost, 1968 - 1976



Dr. Albert Anderson, 1977

resulted in successful funding efforts in 1951, 1955, 1963, and 1976. These appeals, in addition to substantial private gifts, made possible an extensive building program and a substantial increase in faculty salaries. By 1965 three times as many students were applying as could be accepted. When Dr. Cromer retired in 1968 he could look back over nearly twenty years of growth in student body; the addition of eleven buildings and three other major construction projects; new majors in special education for the deaf, nursing, medical technology, sociology, and other fields; a larger faculty; and a vastly increased endowment. Under his successors, Dr. Raymond Bost and Dr. Albert Anderson, Lenoir-Rhyne achieved additional financial security through state tuition grants and through increased support from the Hickory and Catawba Valley business community. A formal covenant with the synod in 1972 demonstrated that Lenoir-Rhyne desired to continue its tradition as a partner and a resource to the synod within the total mission of the church.

Beyond the traditional roles which the synod had assumed, a new role of service to Lutherans in North Carolina began to develop. The first period in the synod's history had been characterized by the role of supervisor over the clergy and their relationships with congregations. Then had come the additional role of sponsor for programs that were too large for individual congregations. This phase of the synod's life had seen the founding of a seminary, of two colleges, orphan homes, a home for the aged, and the establishing of an active home mission program. A third role, demanded by the growing number of causes to be served, was that of fund-raiser. Once the institutions and missions had been established, it seemed that the synod became primarily responsible for ways to keep them going. Now, in the 60's and 70's, a new role emerged. Congregations looked to the synod for services and resources which would assist them in their local ministries. In his President's Report to the synod in 1968, Dr. Whittecar noted that most of the elements of the church beyond the local level were trying "to suggest and assist the congregations . . . without interfering with their basic integrity." This mission can be discerned in a number of new projects undertaken by the synod since 1960.

Perhaps the most ambitious project was the effort to provide better care for the aged within the borders of the state. Earlier the synod had shared in the support of the Lowman Home for the Aged and Helpless, near Columbia in South Carolina. A survey in 1957, however, discovered that the Lowman Home was caring for only 19 North Carolinians, with another 29 on the waiting list, out of 247 persons over 65 who needed a place to live. Synod's Executive Board asked that a program be formulated, and a Board of Trustees for a Ministry to the Aging and Helpless was elected. The Board devised a plan for several local units under one director. Synod approved articles of in-

corporation for the North Carolina Lutheran Homes, together with authorization to borrow up to \$150,000 for construction of the first unit, which was to be at Hickory. Dr. J. L. Norris became the first Director; he was succeeded by the Rev. John A. Pless in 1967. Under their guidance additional units opened in Albemarle and Salisbury. Federal funds helped with construction and operation, but the synod raised well over two million dollars for the cause. In addition, the Rev. J. White Iddings was called to serve as Institutional Chaplain in the Durham area, thus extending the synod's ministry to the infirm beyond the "heartland" of Lutheran strength. In the space of fifteen years the synod successfully added a full-scale program of maintenance, visitation, and health care for the aged to its already-ample ministry.

At the same time that the aged were receiving more attention, the congregations of synod had their interests met in another area. Lutheridge had developed into an excellent year-round camping facility, but congregations asked for other locations which would permit weekend retreats or beach recreation opportunities. The synod employed a consultant in 1966, and three years later sites at Kure Beach and near Sanford had been acquired. Naturally the new locations required development and supervision. In 1972 the Rev. David Castor became Director of Outdoor Ministries with a part of his job to be the raising of additional funds. Back in 1952, the total expenditure for camping had been under \$28,000 all of which went to Lutheridge; in 1976 Lutheridge was budgeted to receive nearly twice that figure, but other camping programs of the synod were to receive nearly \$94,000, or twice the amount budgeted for Lutheridge. Thus, both in case of the aged and camping, the synod demonstrated that its basic priority was service to all the congregations of synod, chiefly through the provision of facilities which would be locally available.

The service theme may also be seen in a restructuring process which began in 1971. In a move to make the Executive Board of Synod more responsive to local concerns, its membership was enlarged to 18, twelve of whom came from specific districts. Committee work was reassigned, both to pare down the number of committees and to provide fuller service to congregations. The President's staff was increased to four full-time positions with no "named" functions so that staff might be utilized where needed. In 1977 the Administrative Assistants were Dr. Ernest Misenheimer, the Rev. Terry Agner, the Rev. David Martin, and the Rev. Richard Rhyne. There was much yet to do. A survey taken in 1974 showed that sixteen of the top thirty tasks of the synod related to care of congregations. The time of service was not over.

In its 175 years of existence the North Carolina Synod had grown from four pastors and 14 congregations to over 280 clergy and 209



Interior of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Charlotte

congregations, Its annual financial program increased from a free-will offering in 1803 to \$2,158,911 in 1977. Minutes of its 1977 annual convention filled 333 pages. This growth was not automatic, nor was it continuous. The synod existed only by fulfilling tasks that congregations could not perform for themselves. In the earliest days the synod's chief responsibility had been the provision of an adequate supply of properly prepared ministers. Later, its functions expanded to include the support of projects, like colleges and foreign missions, which were too large for a congregation to handle alone. Finally; the synod came to be a resource to which congregations and ministers could look for advice, guidance, expertise, creative ideas, and coordination of effort. No doubt other roles and responsibilities await it. Blessed with dedicated members, capable leaders, and a tradition of accomplishment, the North Carolina Synod may anticipate a future of wider ministry in the service of Jesus Christ.





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